The Nation

FOUNDED 1865

Vol. CXXXIV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1932 No. 3477

Contents

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS 213
EDITORIALS:
Great Expectations 216
Open War in China 217
Who Wants to Disarm? 217
Mass Production 218
IF THE SOVIET SHOULD FALL. By Louis Fischer 219
IS FRANCE BACKING JAPAN? By Robert Dell 221
THE WORKERS DEMAND— By Felix Morrow 222
COURT REFORM—A JOB FOR LAYMEN. By I. Maurice Wormser 224
GOVERNMENT BY ORDINANCE IN INDIA. By A. Fenner Brockway 226
IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter 227
CORRESPONDENCE 228
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE 229
FINANCE: WHY COMMODITY PRICES SLUMP. By S. Palmer Harman 230
BOOKS, ART, DRAMA:
So Long It Has for Echoing. By Eda Lou Walton 231
A Philosophy for Carnivores. By Henry Hazlitt 231
Travel Disappoints. By Henry Bamford Parkes 232
Cabell New and Old. By John Macy 232
How Utilities "Educate." By Amos Pinchot 233
Strange Interlude. By Arthur Warner 234
Books in Brief 234
Art: Conversation with a *Surréaliste*. By Paul Rosenfeld 236
Drama: Cleopatra's Nose. By Joseph Wood Krutch 238
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION:
Liberty in the Irish Free State. By Robert Reinhart 239

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, EDITOR

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

DOROTHY VAN DOREN MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

DEVERE ALLEN

DRAMATIC EDITOR JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

LITERARY EDITOR HENRY HAZLITT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

HEYWOOD BROUN FREDA KIRCHWEY MARK VAN DOREN
LEWIS S. GANNETT H. L. MENCKEN CARL VAN DOREN
JOHN A. HOBSON NORMAN THOMAS ARTHUR WARNER

DAVID BOEHM, ADVERTISING MANAGER

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States and Mexico; to Canada, $6.50; and to foreign countries of the Postal Union, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City, Cable Address: NATION, New York. British Agent of Subscriptions and Advertising, Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 23 Brunswick Square, London W. C. 1, England.

THE APPOINTMENT of Benjamin N. Cardozo to the vacancy on the Supreme Court caused by the resignation of Justice Holmes is the best news out of Washington in years. Of Justice Cardozo's fitness for the place it is not necessary to speak; he will bring as much honor to the Supreme Bench as will be added to him by the appointment. It is clear that while strong pressure must have been brought on the President to name a man who was in every possible way outstanding, equally strong representations must have been made by the West and the South for a local candidate in the fear of overbalancing the court by justices from New York. Mr. Hoover chose the handsomer course and he will deserve the gratitude of millions of his fellow-citizens therefor. Nor does it lessen the thanks that will be his due to add that he could hardly have made a happier political gesture. His critics will be speechless; his champions will be more enthusiastic than ever. But criticism silenced in as good a cause is altogether fortunate. The President, the new Supreme Court Justice, and the people of the United States should receive general congratulations all around.

WE HAVE already indicated our belief that the Administration is not likely to succeed in getting present hoarded money back into "sound banks" and "sound securities" by its present ballyhoo methods. It has already been embarrassed by Congressman La Guardia's request that it tell the money hoarders just which particular banks and securities are sound. (Not to speak of the difficulty, mentioned by F. P. A. in the Conning Tower, of finding money to deposit after the first bank which held one's funds has failed.) One positive measure it could take would be to remove the present limit of $2,500 on Postal Savings accounts, and so provide additional refuge for many present frightened holders of money. This is a step that could be taken immediately. Later it may be advisable for the Administration to consider the more thoroughgoing recommendations made in the program of the League for Independent Political Action. These included the removal of the Postal Savings system from the jurisdiction of the Post Office Department, the setting up of a government-owned banking corporation to manage it, and the establishment of separate savings banks in important centers.

AGAIN THE BLOODTHIRSTY Soviets have walked out far in advance of the rest of the world in the way to peace. M. Litvinov, presenting at Geneva the proposals of the Soviet delegation on disarmament, ended nearly all of his telling paragraphs with the remark that the only way to avoid war was to disarm completely. This was, of course, merely a repetition of the proposals made by Soviet Russia at earlier conferences; this time, one may note, it was not greeted with the abuse that welcomed it before. However, although the plans of France, Great Britain, and the United States, unsatisfactory as they were, appeared on the first page of the New York *Times*, M. Litvinov was relegated to page 4. An offer to disarm is evidently not news. Soviet Russia not only proposed total disarmament as the only way to peace, but offered to agree to every possible intermediate proposal for partial limitation that any other country might advance. In M. Litvinov's speech occurred another point worth remarking. It must be clear to all, he said, that "the Soviet requires neither increase of territory nor interference in the affairs of other nations to achieve its aim." By means of the Five-Year Plan, with its "colossal achievements in every sphere of economic life," by a furious and passionate zeal for industrial progress, the Russians have found the "moral equivalent for war." They can disarm because they have better things to do than fight.

THE ASSASSINATION of Junnosuke Inouye, former Finance Minister of Japan, has strengthened the hands of the Japanese militarists. By the same token his death is a serious blow to the hopes of that small group of public men in Japan who wanted the country to pursue peaceful methods in Manchuria and Shanghai. This group was led by three men: Premier Hamaguchi, who was assassinated last August; Inouye, who has fallen by the same foul means; and Baron Shidehara, former Foreign Minister, who, despite his illness, is continuing the struggle virtually alone. These men were frankly imperialists; they believed in the colonization policy of Japan, and doubtless recognized the dangers involved in following that policy. But they sought at all times, primarily by attempting to restrain the militarists, to prevent Japanese penetration of the Asiatic mainland from taking the form of military aggression. It seemed probable that the Minseito

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Party, to which these three men belonged, would carry the national elections late in February. Had they been victorious it was intended that Inouye should assume the premiership. But Inouye is dead, and it is now a question whether the Minseito liberals or the conservatives and militarists will win the election. The police are satisfied that Inouye's assassin acted upon his own initiative and was not connected with any of the militarist or superpatriotic societies. Nevertheless, the responsibility can be indirectly traced to the militarists, for their propaganda, with which the Japanese press has been filled since last June, has been sufficient to turn great masses of the Japanese people not only against the Chinese, but also against the liberals and moderates at home.

HOW FAR into the interior of China will the Japanese carry their present drive? Japanese diplomats suggest that they would be content to have the Chinese retire a minimum of twenty miles from Shanghai. But the Japanese commanders have established no such limit. Lieutenant General Kenkichi Uyeda declared that the farther the Chinese retired the better it would be for everyone concerned. Admiral Nomura was more specific. He said:

> Our function is to drive the hostile Chinese armies far enough away from Shanghai so that they will no longer be a menace. I can say that the exact distance for this is dependent upon the character of the Chinese armament and means of transportation. In areas where railways and highways are non-existent it would be ample to eject them just beyond the range of their most powerful artillery, but where railways and highways exist the distances may be greater, depending upon their supplies, trucks, automobiles, and rolling stock.

This does not look as though the militarists would be satisfied with a twenty-mile neutral zone around Shanghai. Rather does it appear as though they intend to take over all means of transportation far up the Yangtze valley, dislodging the Chinese troops from their positions along the river and along the railways in this area, for how otherwise can the Japanese ever feel certain that they are safely removed from the menace of the terribly aggressive Chinese?

TWO JUDGES have recently been nominated by President Hoover for appointments on the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. One is James H. Wilkerson of Chicago. Donald R. Richberg, as general counsel for the Railway Labor Executives' Association, has this to say, among other equally arresting remarks, of Judge Wilkerson's fitness for the position:

> In the Daugherty injunction case of 1922 he attempted to enjoin legitimate activities of labor unions in carrying on a lawful strike and he violated the express prohibitions of the Clayton Act. He set aside the constitutional guaranties of liberty of contract and free speech. He attempted to extend the authority of a single District Court throughout the United States. . . . He permitted his court to be used to prevent the settlement of the shopmen's strike. . . . He wrote bitterly partisan opinions in this case, branding as criminal conspirators labor leaders of unblemished reputations, although the government admitted that it had been unable . . . to produce any evidence connecting a single one of these leaders with any unlawful act.

Mr. Hoover's other appointee is Judge Kenneth Mackintosh of Seattle. Judge Mackintosh, too, has a record which organized labor would do well to protest. When sitting on the Supreme Court of the State of Washington he rendered the following opinion on picketing:

> This Court has declared all picketing unlawful, announcing that the term sometimes used of "peaceful picketing" is self-contradictory and meaningless, that picketing, in and of itself, is coercive and that is its purpose and effect.

Aside from the fact that the late Chief Justice Taft rendered an opinion that picketing was lawful in the American Foundries *vs.* Tri-Cities Council case, thereby offering disagreement with Judge Mackintosh from the highest court in the country, it seems plain that neither Judge Wilkerson nor Judge Mackintosh, because of obvious bias and prejudice, is fitted to be seated on the bench of any court which will hear labor cases. It is a sad commentary on the strength of the labor movement in the United States that confirmation of these appointments seems all too likely. Yet while there is still time, every possible protest should be made, if not by labor itself then by the advocates of civil liberties and the right to organize.

AN INTERESTING BY-PRODUCT of Great Britain's new tariff enthusiasm and "Buy-British" campaign is the break that those in power have made with all expert opinion. Ferdinand Kuhn, Jr., in a dispatch to the New York *Times,* points out that nearly every British economist of repute is now opposing the new tariff policy. Sir Walter Layton, Britain's delegate on the Basel Advisory Committee, has remarked that Britain is making "an unrepentant plunge—sword in hand—in the midst of a tariff battle which is fast bringing the world to bankruptcy." Henry Clay, economic adviser to the Bank of England, has predicted that the new tariff will not help to restore Britain's balance of trade in the slightest. Francis W. Hirst and Professor T. E. Gregory have ranged themselves unreservedly against the new tariff, and J. M. Keynes, who had advocated a small revenue or emergency tariff before Britain went off the gold standard, has since declared that with the collapse of sterling the justification for a tariff has vanished. To all this the British Government turns a deaf ear, just as Mr. Hoover did to the protest against the Hawley-Smoot tariff signed by practically every economist of note in the United States.

WAR IN KENTUCKY is no less important to us than war in China. Indeed, the civil warfare now in progress in the mining sections of that State may have far more serious consequences. The Kentucky authorities are fighting with every weapon they can command, but their favorite weapons have been hunger and suppression of civil liberties. In *The Nation* of January 13 we discussed the case of Harry Appleman, Kentucky grocer, who was arrested on a charge of criminal syndicalism after he and his wife had spent their savings on a carload of flour which they distributed to the miners' families. More recently county officials have stopped the distribution of all food supplies and clothing sent to Kentucky from outside the State. When a committee of New York writers, including Waldo Frank, Mary Heaton Vorse, Edmund Wilson, and others, brought

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

several truckloads of food into the State they were arrested on charges of disorderly conduct. After their release they were escorted to the State boundary, where two of their number were beaten up. As these lines are written, word comes that two National Guard companies have been sent to the mining country to suppress a meeting of the National Miners' Union, the only group that has sought to help the pit workers form an effective organization for their struggle against starvation wages and impossible working conditions. Kentucky's only answer to the pleas of these men for food and justice is to supplement the tyranny of the local authorities with a show of military force.

SOCIALIST MILWAUKEE is not alone in enjoying efficient municipal government. Cincinnati, which has a city manager, also did well in 1931. It was able to reduce its bonded debt by the sum of $1,193,719, and to cut its tax rate to $9.10 per thousand dollars, the lowest tax rate of any American city with a population of 300,000 or more. By abolishing politics from the municipal administration a saving of $26,000 was effected in the Public Works Department, while the saving in the Water Works Department ran to more than $75,000. As a result of these economies a new schedule of water rates has been adopted which will reduce the water bill of the consumers by approximately $300,000 annually. Major reductions were made in the appropriations for other departments which probably would have been impossible had not the City Manager, C. A. Dykstra, been unhampered by politics. Despite these economies, Cincinnati expanded its public-works program during 1931 and thus provided extra jobs for many of the city's unemployed; moreover, it spent more than $770,000 on direct unemployment relief. Of this latter amount $678,000 came from city departments which, as a result of their increased efficiency and through close economizing, managed to save that much out of their annual appropriations. This is doubtless a source of satisfaction to the citizens of Cincinnati, but to the residents of almost any other city in the country it is a sad, sad story.

THE CONVICTION FOR MURDER of one Vincent Mummiani was reversed on February 9 by the New York State Court of Appeals on the ground that the prisoner had been subjected to the third degree. Commissioner Mulrooney's comment on this is an indignant denial that Mummiani was beaten and starved into making a confession, as the defense alleges, and an announcement that hereafter an "outside" physician will be called in to examine every person held for a major crime. Just how disinterested Mr. Mulrooney's "outsider" will be remains a question; if he searched far enough the Commissioner might succeed in finding a physician who would attest that a bruised prisoner had received his contusions by falling downstairs in his eagerness to consult with the nice, kind policemen. But this is hardly the point. Mental torture leaves no traces on suffering flesh; sleeplessness, hunger, thirst, even the rubber hose expertly applied are not evidenced by black-and-blue spots on the human hide. Commissioner Mulrooney would do better to save his indignation, to put aside his plans to spare his policemen from unkind accusations of brutality, and to remember the law which provides for "prompt production of a suspect before a magistrate." Here, as pointed out by Zechariah Chafee, Jr., in the *Atlantic Monthly,* is the first and simplest way of avoiding charges of having administered the third degree. This device of merely obeying the law would be far more reassuring to a cynical public largely convinced of the prevalence of rubber-hose methods in the police station than any number of protestations about the steaks and the coffee and rolls furnished by obliging policemen to unfortunate prisoners, who are not, it seems, properly grateful.

WHILE THE SENATE is haggling over the question of federal aid for the hungry, the Connery Old Age Pension Bill has been unanimously reported out of committee in the House. This bill provides for a federal appropriation of $10,000,000 to be apportioned among the States to make up one-third of the fund; the States are to supply the remaining two-thirds. That the bill should be passed is obvious; that it is niggardly is equally plain. Persons to be aided must be sixty-five years of age, must not possess property in excess of $5,000, and must be without other means of support; in addition, while the amount of the pension is not fixed by the bill, no sum in excess of $1 a day is discussed in it. With this princely sum the forthright champions of rugged individualism will reward the aged and destitute citizens of the Republic. It is estimated that there are 6,600,000 persons in the country sixty-five years of age or over, and that of these a third are in need of an old-age pension. At a dollar a day, to pension them would require $800,000,000. The government's $10,000,000, therefore, even augmented by the $20,000,000 from the States, seems a modest enough sum to ask. The measure has been valiantly pushed by the American Association for Old Age Security, the need for it was surely never greater, and every person who has reached or who hopes to reach the age of sixty-five should be its champion.

THE THREAT OF EXTINCTION to the *Police Gazette,* which missed an issue for the first time in eighty-five years and may never appear again, will cause pain in many a manly breast. Gone are the days when it appeared in every barber-shop in town; gone, also, are the days when its ladies in tights were not to be viewed by one's maiden aunt. But the sentimental attachment to its bright pink pages is strong. A thousand barber-shops in New York still subscribe to it; every army post receives its copy; and the chaplain at Fort Leavenworth is on the list of subscribers. There will be mourners enough for its passing, even though one barber on Second Avenue declared that customers now are in too much of a hurry to read it. "They don't sit around to hear you play the guitar or sing songs like they did when my father ran the shop." Another proof that the good old days of leisure are gone. Today we shave hurriedly with a safety razor, gulp breakfast, and dash for the subway. If we read, we read the tabloids or the *New Yorker,* wherein, be it noted, ladies in tights—or ladies without tights—abound. Indeed, not the lack of leisure but too much competition probably proved the undoing of the *Police Gazette.* Readers with only two cents can get all the spicy reading about morals or murders they want in the *Daily Scab;* readers who will invest three-fifths of a quarter can buy louder, funnier, and smarter pictures and comments in brighter-colored magazines.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Great Expectations

THE jubilation which followed the proposal of the Glass-Steagall bill, under the impression, held for example by Senator Vandenberg, that "this bill means more money," and that "its effect will be to bring the price of the dollar down and the commodity price index up," is likely to be considerably modified when the real purpose and probable effect of the measure are better understood. What the measure proposes immediately is an extension of the rediscount privileges of the Federal Reserve banks, and it provides also for the possible issue of Federal Reserve notes against the collateral of government obligations. The measure is regarded by its chief sponsors as a purely emergency one; the increased rediscounting and note-issuing privileges it extends are to expire at the end of one year from the passage of the act.

The purpose of the Glass-Steagall bill is clear enough when the present situation and the present rediscounting and note-issuing arrangements are understood. Within the last year there has been a steady demand throughout the country for more hand-to-hand currency. This has developed for two main reasons. The failure of more than 2,500 banks, with deposits of nearly $2,000,000,000, since the beginning of 1931, leaving hundreds of communities without banking accommodation of any kind, has compelled the population of those communities to carry on business in cash instead of by check. But it has also undermined confidence in banks, and led to withdrawals of cash or failure to make fresh deposits. This in turn has driven the banks to borrow against—"rediscount"—part of their holdings of commercial paper at the Federal Reserve banks, and to secure Federal Reserve notes for them to meet the demands of their own depositors. The result has been that though price levels and business activity have steadily fallen in the last twelve months, the volume of Federal Reserve notes has increased more than $1,000,000,000. But even this increase does not mean that the situation has been met adequately. For the banks that were compelled to come to the Federal Reserve for more currency could do so only if they held "eligible" paper, that is to say, merchants' notes with (except for agricultural paper, which may run longer) a maturity of three months or less. When their holdings of such eligible paper were exhausted, they could no longer continue to borrow and to draw currency from the Federal Reserve banks, even though they held other sound assets. The Glass-Steagall bill attempts to meet this situation by permitting any group of five or more independently controlled banks to borrow against their joint promissory note—upon receiving the consent of not fewer than six members of the Federal Reserve Board—and it permits any individual bank, with $500,000 capital or less, under similar circumstances, to borrow against its promissory note for a period of not more than one year after the passage of the act. The notes in each case must be secured by satisfactory collateral, which presumably will include long-term obligations, but no loans of this sort are to be made unless the banks concerned have no further ordinarily "eligible" paper available; and all such loans are to bear an interest rate at least 1 per cent higher than the prevailing rediscount rate. Finally, at any time within the twelve months' period, should the Federal Reserve Board deem it in the public interest, it may, upon a majority vote, authorize the Federal Reserve banks to issue currency against the collateral of direct United States Government obligations.

In speculating upon the probable effect of the measure it is necessary to distinguish between the more liberal borrowing provisions and the new currency provisions. To permit banks to borrow against their promissory notes is a sound emergency measure, particularly when it is safeguarded by penalty rates. The chief criticism to be made of it in its present form is that it does not go far enough to be as effective as it might be. There is no sound reason why the privilege should be limited to banks with less than $500,000 capital, as an amendment, inserted after the original bill was published, provides. The purpose of the measure is not to help this or that particular little deserving bank, but general confidence, and this purpose can be achieved even more by providing help for large banks than for small ones. Another pointless restriction—inspired mainly by political prejudices—is that prohibiting foreign obligations to serve as part of the collateral against any of these emergency loans.

The currency provisions are more questionable. The main object in a time of crisis is to keep banks liquid; and when increased currency is permitted, it should not be for its own sake, but merely to achieve the end of bank liquidity. Any currency issued as a result of borrowing by the member banks, and secured by sound assets, is a good currency; and in a time of crisis these assets may justifiably be less liquid than in ordinary times. But the issuance of Federal Reserve notes against government obligations can easily be subjected to abuses; the Federal Reserve banks can and do buy government obligations in the open market on their own initiative, and if they should deliberately pursue a cheap-money policy, as they have in the past, they might issue such currency unwisely. The provision, nevertheless, may be useful as a weapon against any foreign government or bank that might suddenly begin withdrawing gold from our market. In that case the Federal Reserve Board could prevent a restriction of credit by authorizing the government-bond-secured currency to take the place of the gold withdrawn.

In sum, the measure will permit a greater expansion of the Federal Reserve currency than could otherwise take place, to meet the extraordinary demand caused by bank failures and hoarding; it will make the position of the member banks in the Federal Reserve system potentially more liquid, so that they will be somewhat more free to extend credit against sound assets than they have been. But two apparently widespread illusions ought to be dispelled. The new measure may reduce the number of bank failures, but it will not, as some sanguine supporters have asserted, put a stop to them; and unless it is very gravely abused it will not "raise prices" through "inflation." It will supplement the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, but it will be of no direct aid to non-member banks, in which by far the greater number of failures has occurred.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Open War in China

A STATE of war exists in Shanghai and the lower Yangtze valley. This can no longer be disputed by those experts on international law who are forever splitting hairs over the definition of war. The Japanese invasion of Shanghai has gone beyond mere "protection of the lives and property of Japanese nationals"; it has gone beyond that form of "reprisal" which international law allows stronger Powers to take against weaker nations whenever the spirit moves them. That the fighting in the Shanghai area actually constitutes war, despite the absence of formal declarations, is openly recognized by the special committee of the League of Nations which has been inquiring into the Shanghai situation. It is, moreover, tacitly acknowledged by the Japanese themselves, and by the other Powers. The United States went to war with Germany on the strength of a Congressional resolution which, strictly speaking, was not a formal declaration of war, but simply a declaration that a state of war with Germany existed. The Russo-Japanese war in 1904 was also begun with a surprise attack by the Japanese without a formal declaration.

Notwithstanding their public utterances the Japanese are not deceiving themselves as to the actual meaning of their activities at Shanghai. They intend to carry their operation in the Yangtze valley through to successful conclusion. To this end they are massing a formidable army in China. This force is not limited to the ten or twenty thousand men which Tokio has at various times hinted it might send to Shanghai, only to deny later that it was considering dispatching any reinforcements. But now, according to foreign military observers on the scene, the Japanese have actually landed 35,000 men, and there is no telling how many more may be on the way. It is recalled that when the Allied Powers intervened in Siberia in 1918, it was agreed that Japan should send in 10,000 of its troops and no more. Some months later Tokio asked permission to increase its quota to 12,000. This aroused the suspicion of Major General William S. Graves, the American commander, who investigated and found that there were not 10,000, nor even 12,000, Japanese soldiers stationed in Siberia, but 72,000.

As a matter of diplomatic technique it probably would be unwise for the other foreign Powers openly to announce that they consider a state of war to exist in Shanghai. They are nevertheless proceeding on that assumption and are insisting upon full observance of their rights as neutrals. What action they will take now that the Japanese have violated those rights remains to be seen. The International Settlement is to all intents and purposes foreign territory under the protection of certain Powers. Thus it is neutral territory. The representatives of the Powers and the authorities of the Settlement have announced that they mean to defend the area against invasion, and that they also intend to prevent its being used by the Japanese as a base of operations against the Chinese, for such use would be tantamount to a breach of the Settlement's neutrality. To this the Japanese agreed only a week ago, definitely promising the British Consul General, J. F. Brenan, that they would land no more troops in the Settlement. Nevertheless, this promise, solemnly given, was deliberately broken when the latest reinforcements arrived from Japan.

Throughout the action in the Shanghai district the Japanese have time and again ignored their promises and have upon several occasions disregarded the rights of other Powers. The League committee that has been studying the Shanghai question found that while it is still not clear which side started the fighting, "the offensive is entirely in the hands of the Japanese." The committee added that soon after the fighting began the Japanese initiated a reign of terror. But it should not be difficult to determine the aggressor in this affair. It was the Japanese who sent a naval force to Shanghai—a provocative act, if not legally an act of aggression—and it is the Japanese who are now sending an army into China, and who are, according to the League's investigators, carrying on offensive warfare. We certainly do not want this war continued; we want it stopped at once; but we nevertheless must recognize that a state of war exists, and that Japan began that war. Frank acknowledgment of that fact at Geneva and elsewhere would do much to clear the air and make the Japanese realize the seriousness of their position. Not even they could be foolhardy enough to brave the firmly and frankly expressed censure of the whole rest of the world.

Who Wants to Disarm?

AT Geneva are gathered the representatives of virtually all the nations of the world. They have come together for the avowed purpose of working out a program for reducing national armaments. It is clear that the peoples of all countries want actual, sincere disarmament. It is not so clear that their representatives in Geneva have any such desire. True, they say that they want to reduce armaments, and they know that their people want this done, but no delegation except that of Soviet Russia has yet offered a concrete suggestion that would help bring this about. The hypocritical proposals of France we have already discussed. France has been denounced ever since the war as a militaristic country. The French now wish to get out from under this censure, not by reducing armaments, but by sharing with the rest of the world the responsibility for maintaining a huge war machine. The British, taking issue with the French on the question of a League of Nations army, have nothing practical to offer in its place. Sir John Simon, the British Foreign Secretary, wants to discuss the entire question on the basis of the draft convention which several preliminary conferences labored over and never got completed. He would support "the establishment of a permanent disarmament commission," abolish gas and chemical warfare, and "press for the abolition of submarines." The Soviet delegation has reiterated its plea for complete abolition of all arms and armies, but if any other delegation is planning to support this proposal, the fact has not yet been made public.

Germany, of course, is in no position to lay down the law to the other Powers, to say that this or that plan will lead to actual disarmament. But the Germans have public law and, if there is such a thing, international morality on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their side. The Allied and Associated Powers at Versailles twice promised Germany, once in a note to the German delegation and later in the League Covenant, that its own involuntary disarmament would be followed by a reduction of the military forces of other countries. Chancellor Brüning has now called upon the world to redeem this pledge. He told the Geneva conference that Germany wants "a general disarmament which would be put into effect for all nations according to the same principles and which would create an equal measure of security for all peoples." But beyond this generality the German Chancellor has had nothing specific to offer.

Ambassador Gibson, acting chairman of the American delegation, presented what was, next to the French proposal, the most definite and detailed program the disarmament conference has yet heard. The American program has nine points. It supports the British thesis that we already have sufficient peace machinery and that this machinery should now be made secure by reducing armaments. It denies the contention of André Tardieu and the French that world peace must first "be organized." But examined closely, what is there of real value in the American program? Nothing whatever. The first point suggests the willingness of the American delegation to discuss disarmament. The second expresses the hope that France and Italy will forget their differences and accept the London naval treaty. The third recommends indefinite further cuts in naval forces, if France and Italy can come to an agreement. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and eighth points would abolish submarines, protect civilians from aerial bombardments, abolish gas and bacteriological warfare, and place special restrictions on tanks and heavy mobile guns. The seventh, referring to something called "the computation of the number of armed forces on the basis of the effectives necessary for the maintenance of internal order plus some suitable contingent for defense," is unintelligible. The ninth point merely presents another excuse for postponing acceptance of budgetary limitation of armaments.

Where in this whole detailed program is there to be found the slightest hope of real disarmament? Naturally, great naval Powers like the United States and England want to abolish submarines, which are the only defense small countries have against the big fleets of their more fortunate neighbors. And how are civilians to be protected from aerial bombardments? Unhappily, Mr. Gibson does not say. Nor does he mention the fact that the United States has already signed two treaties looking toward the abolition of gas and chemical warfare, neither of which has been ratified by the Senate, though both have been before that body for from seven to ten years. In short, the American program, as the New York *World-Telegram* has pointed out, is "only another plan to make war pretty, which can't be done."

Starting with nothing, the Geneva conference will now proceed to discuss this nothing for several months. What it will wind up with cannot be foretold. Why has not some delegation besides the Soviet group, which will not be taken seriously, mustered up courage enough to come forward with a plan to slash all armaments 25 per cent, or 50 per cent, or to abolish them entirely? The question remains, Do the people gathered at Geneva today really want disarmament?

Mass Production

EDGAR WALLACE has just died of pneumonia in Hollywood. The news is news to far more people than would note the passing of almost any other contemporary author, and as one reads the obituary notices in the New York *Times* one is struck by the fact that the story of his life is interesting in much the same way as is one of his innumerable novels or plays. It is, to be sure, almost as improbable, but—and this is even more important—its values lie so close to the surface that there is nothing to say about them. Critics were not inclined to talk about his books because it is not necessary to explain why injured innocence or wily crime is exciting, and it would be the most gratuitous sort of lily-painting to attempt to point out the picturesqueness of his career for the simple and similar reason that it includes almost everything which could appeal to the popular imagination.

He was, to begin with, not only poor and an orphan but actually a waif, and when at the age of nine days he got himself adopted, he was careful to choose as foster-father a man who followed that most notorious of humble callings, fishmonging. Of course he sold papers; of course he enlisted for the Boer War; and then, by one of those sudden transitions which biographers never explain because only the inexplicable element of outstanding talent can account for them, he next appears earning $3,000 a year as a war correspondent. About twenty years ago he gave up active newspaper work for what another would have called "leisure to write," and became the most popular as well as the most prolific author of detective stories. He is said to have worked from twelve to twenty-one hours a day, and with the aid of a dictaphone he composed some 140 novels, besides innumerable plays and more newspaper articles than he could remember.

The legend of his prolificness pleased the popular imagination, but here again it was apparently impossible for the fiction to surpass the fact. He once did a 36,000-word article in a day, two plays in four days each, and on another occasion, which even he regarded as somewhat unusual, he found twenty-four hours sufficient in which to write two short stories and a racing article, attend a full rehearsal of a play, and make a speech at lunch. In three years he wrote twenty plays, six of which were enjoying successful runs at the same time in London; and another year's industry produced twenty books, eight plays, three hundred columns of theatrical criticism, three hundred columns of racing news, thirty magazine articles, and a few "odds and ends."

Apparently Wallace was amiable, modest, and unpretentious, but there is no use in attributing to him qualities which he did not possess, or of assuming that because King George admired his work it had any merits beyond fluency and a kind of gusto which routine did not seem to destroy. The very fact that he could turn out so much which was up to the required standard is enough to prove that the standard was not very high, and it would not be unjust to apply to him one of Dr. Johnson's most famous remarks. A tree, he said, might produce nothing but crabs; but if it produced a great many of them, then it was a very good crab tree.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If the Soviet Should Fall

By LOUIS FISCHER

Berlin, January 10

THE Soviet Union is making uninterrupted economic progress. The rate of its industrial construction, I believe, was unequaled either in the United States during the great expansion westward or by England during its industrial revolution. But both America and Britain have built quickly and well at various stages of their development. So have Germany and Japan. There have been times when these countries, like Russia today, had no unemployment. Rapid industrial growth is not peculiar to a Socialist state.

The Five-Year Plan, to be sure, has demonstrated that communism is capable of construction as well as destruction. Moreover, time is a decisive factor in all human events, and the fact that the period of tremendous Soviet economic upbuilding coincides with years of crisis, financial collapse, universal unemployment, and mass psychological depression in bourgeois states throws Russia's achievements into sharp relief. Before the Soviet Government can be credited with any unique distinction, it is necessary, however, to show that the idea and execution of the Five-Year Plan differ basically and qualitatively from industrialization processes which have preceded it in capitalist countries.

In the youth of capitalist countries—as in their adult life of course—individualism ran amuck. Victory was to the strong. The early history of many great American trusts is a record of crimes illustrated with the tombstones of those who fell that a few might succeed. This initial period has put its stamp on the national psychology. The powers that be in the economic world glory in individualism because it was the ladder by which they climbed to success. By that token, individualism is a weapon for the suppression of the weak.

Russia is being built up by collective effort, and human nature is shaping itself to conform to this concrete, irresistible circumstance. In its pioneering stage, when the character of its people is being molded, the political and economic system of the U. S. S. R. sternly represses any tendencies toward personal enrichment and property ownership. The men who find highest praise in Soviet society are those who do least for themselves and most for the masses. A generation is growing up which sets no store by individual wealth and even regards possessions as "bourgeois." Bolshevism permits of savings, of bond investments, of interest payments. One Russian may be richer than another. Money, however, can bring comfort or luxury in Soviet Russia, but never power. No citizen can use his funds to build factories or houses. The wealth of the individual, in other words, is not capital. It is only an article of consumption.

Some time ago in Moscow I attended a conference of the managers of all the gigantic construction projects which the Soviet Government had undertaken in accordance with the Five-Year Plan. The director of Magnitogorsk was there, the biggest steel town in the world; of Dnieperstroi, the biggest dam in the world; of the Nizhni Novgorod automobile works, and so on. After the proceedings they came up to introduce themselves to me. The Russian introduces himself by stating his name. But these directors, instead of extending their hands and saying "Dybets," or "Ivanov," or "Sidorov," said "Autostroi," "Dnieperstroi," "Magnitogorsk." They had merged and identified themselves with their jobs.

Does the collectivist, unindividualistic method of sovietism slacken the rate of economic progress? Are incentive and initiative eliminated? Stalin's compensation, of course, is not the salary of 300 rubles which he receives monthly. Nor do most prominent and rank-and-file Communists work endless hours for the miserable wage they earn. They are impelled to self-sacrifice and an enormous expenditure of energy by the will to succeed of the whole movement, by faith in the wisdom and advantages of their policies, and by the satisfaction of participating in the fulfilment of a life's ideal. In varying degree this same spirit filters down into millions of workers, but for the proletariat and the peasantry, as well as for the bulk of non-party government officials, the first incentive is financial reward. Yet over and beyond this, a social motive enters into play. An author in any country may write with an eye on royalties and fees. Nevertheless, public praise is an important element in his "pay." Applause does not increase the size of a musician's check, but it makes him happier. He plays more eagerly under the audience's approval. In this sense every laborer in Russia is in a position parallel to that of the artist. The nation owns the factories. The nation acclaims the most successful factory and the most efficient workers in each factory. Soviet newspapers follow the construction of a plant or the progress of an industry with the same richness of detail which foreign dailies devote to love tragedies and murder stories. The worker is in the limelight. He basks in it and reacts to it. The interest in his activities and welfare creates an enthusiasm that accelerates the pace of progress. It is all part of the collective spirit which sharply distinguishes the Soviet system.

Planning is another distinguishing and anti-individualist characteristic of Bolshevik economy. When bourgeois economists speak of applying a plan to capitalism they are, in fact, proposing a marriage between collectivism and individualism. They wish to add elephants and fountain pens. They want to graft oranges on to onions. Individualism and collectivism belong to unrelated species.

The plan makes Soviet socialism organically different from world capitalism. It is not only that planned economy enjoys obvious and now generally recognized advantages over the anarchy and waste of capitalist production, but that the organization and control of industry in the U. S. S. R. are altogether unlike that in other states. First, there is state ownership and management. Then there is workers' participation in the direction of industry. The class in a capitalist economy which earns without working—in contradistinction to the class which works without earning very much—has been eliminated. Competition does not wholly disappear. One trust strives to outbid another for available freight facilities, labor, and credits. A certain amount of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rivalry remains. Though the manager of one Soviet corporation does not earn a penny more if he increases output or shows a better profit, he tries hard to outwit his neighbor and put in the biggest possible stock of equipment and raw material. The plan, moreover, breaks down in places. Infallibility is not assumed, and numerous elements defy control or anticipation. These circumstances notwithstanding, planning does reduce waste and overlapping to a minimum, and wipes out direct losses due, for instance, to overproduction—in other words, to badly organized consumption.

It is often submitted that Stalin has adopted capitalist methods in industry. Is not the insistence that each trust or factory pay its own way a concession to capitalism? Unless a plant can prove that it has orders, it can no longer receive credits from the State Bank. Industries are now permitted to retain a greater share of their profits for reinvestment or for improvement in the living conditions of their workers. This, too, has been called a reversion to capitalism.

Now it is perfectly true that the Soviet Government applies many of the methods of private capitalism. It maintains large factories, for instance. It pays wages. It makes bread by baking dough, electricity by harnessing water power. It produces and sells goods for money. A tractor manufactured by Henry Ford may be an exact copy of one produced in Stalingrad. Yet the Detroit plant is private property and the factory on the Volga state property. The American tractor is usually sold to a private farmer; the Soviet tractor to a collective. With Ford, labor is a commodity like steel and glass. He buys it on the market. In the U. S. S. R., the worker is the hub of the universe. His interests come first.

Wool travels the same road from the sheep's back to the clothing store, whether it be in Moscow or Berlin or New York. The manufacturing processes coincide. The difference is in the formula that Socialist industry does not produce for profit. In Berlin and New York the clothing merchant asks himself how much he can get for a suit. In Moscow the cooperative or state store asks itself how little it can afford to take. I do not mean to indicate that prices are always lower in Russia than in America and Europe. For the moment, the U. S. S. R. is a technically backward country, and costs are excessive. But the Bolshevik principle of price determination is diametrically opposed to that which dominates in bourgeois lands. Similarly, wages are fixed as high as the state can pay and not as low as the workers will accept. Man was not made for industry, but industry for man. In a society which is anti-individualist, the individual may in the end gather richer fruits than under a system vociferously individualistic.

It has been said that "Stalinism" represents a compromise with capitalism. Actually, however, Soviet internal policy has never been as radical as it is today. Since 1929, since the emergence of what has been styled "Stalinism," a vigorous, uninterrupted, and loudly heralded campaign has been in progress to eradicate the last weak roots of private capitalism both in the Soviet city and the Soviet village. What remains is not viable. Moreover, there is no road back to capitalism. Zigzags to the right and left are possible. But no sharp deviation from the anti-capitalism of the Bolsheviks is conceivable in Russia—unless the Soviet Government is overthrown—and prophets of that eventuality have been very silent of late. The younger generation in the U. S. S. R. did not know capitalism but it hates it nevertheless. Certain obvious fruits of bolshevism will not readily be surrendered. Apart, however, from the social opposition to capitalism, objective facts and physical institutions would make the reestablishment of capitalism in Russia impossible or at least a costly adventure.

The fall of the Soviet regime is theoretically possible, but the rapid development of Socialist economic features makes it increasingly difficult to substitute other—capitalist—forms for those which exist today. Agrarian collectives are the outstanding example. If the Soviets had been driven from power prior to collectivization, capitalism might have stepped into their shoes in the villages without modifying the organization of production or the outward shell of economic life. But 100,000 tractors are 100,000 obstructions to a new regime. If the collectives fall apart under a new capitalistic state, who will own the tractors, the thousands of combines, the other large agricultural machines? Few Russian peasants are rich enough to own them individually. Some form of collectivism must remain. Yet a capitalist order would seek to destroy collectivism and, *ipso facto,* mechanization. If it succeeded in overcoming the communal organization of villages, agriculture would take a tremendous step backward to pre-war primitiveness. The giant government farms where the peasants are merely employees of the farmer-state constitute an even greater obstacle to non-Soviet methods of agrarian cultivation, for here the basis of work is mass production of grain, directed from central headquarters, under conditions of 100 per cent mechanization. If private initiative took over an ordinary state farm, the farm would be divided into perhaps 5,000 individual holdings. Then 5,000 private homes would be needed, 5,000 plows, 5,000 barns —and again the question would arise of the ownership and use of the mechanical equipment. The farther collectivization progresses, the greater the purely physical obstacles to discarding the economic features of bolshevism on the land.

In the city the collapse of the Soviets would be tantamount to industrial ruin. All Soviet factories, railroads, mines, oil fields, hydroelectric power stations, forests, newspapers, publishing houses, dwellings, stores, theaters, baths are owned by the state or by semi-state cooperatives. Suppose this state disappeared. There are no capitalists in Russia to take over all these economic institutions. Not only is there no private capital of any dimensions; there are no private capitalists. The presumption, then, is that the new capitalist regime would assume control of industry, transport, distribution, and entertainment—but it could do so only temporarily. Its individualistic, capitalistic nature would protest against government ownership and government management. Who would buy the industrial plants? Only foreigners would be in a financial position to do so. Russia would become a colony of the rest of the world. But the world bourgeoisie, suffering now from overproduction and interested at all times in new markets, must object to Russian industrialization. It would prefer to have Russia buy machines from Europe and America. The overthrow of bolshevism in the U. S. S. R., accordingly, would stop the country's economic growth. More, it would inevitably mean industrial and agrarian retrogression. It may very well be that a nation which has lived for even a limited period under socialism cannot return to capitalism any more than England or America could become a feudal state without inviting economic disaster.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is France Backing Japan?

By ROBERT DELL

Paris, February 2

THE French reactions to the Japanese attack on Shanghai are very significant. During the session of the Council of the League of Nations in Paris in November and December most of those that closely followed the proceedings of the Council had a strong suspicion that there was a secret understanding between France and Japan. It was the hypothesis that best fitted the facts and best explained Briand's conduct. No doubt the thick-and-thin support given to Japan by the overwhelming majority of the French papers had the explanation usual in such cases in France. It must have cost the Japanese Government a lot of money. But the semi-official press could not have gone so far as it did in defending the action of Japan in Manchuria without the consent of the French Government. Most significant of all was the attitude of the papers immediately under Briand's influence. Some of them began by severely censuring Japan and demanding strong action by the League Council, but after a very short time they suddenly shut down and said nothing. And when the Council capitulated to Japan on every point and produced a resolution that was a monument of hypocrisy, those papers sang in chorus a hymn of praise to Aristide Briand, who had prevented war in Asia. Yet there was not a single person in Paris, either on the Council of the League or outside it, who did not know perfectly well that when the Council authorized the Japanese to continue military operations to repress "bandits," it was giving Japan a free hand in Manchuria and, ultimately, in China as a whole. It is a pity that the Government of the United States acquiesced in the attempt to humbug the opinion of the world.

Now that the capitulation of the League Council has had the consequences that it was bound to have and that some of us foretold, the attitude of the French press confirms the suspicion that there is a secret Franco-Japanese understanding. The *Temps,* organ of the Quai d'Orsay and the Comité des Forges, has not had a word of blame for the bombardment of an undefended town without a declaration of war and the massacre of hundreds or thousands of its innocent inhabitants. On the contrary the *Temps* declares that Japan is acting "within the strictly defined limits of the treaties and international agreements." When it was inaccurately reported that China had declared war on Japan, the *Temps* said that, if it were true, China had put herself entirely in the wrong, had designated herself as the "aggressor," and had violated the Kellogg Pact, which, it seems, is not violated by the attacks on Shanghai and Nanking. "Pertinax" has shown his contempt for the intelligence of the readers of the *Echo de Paris* by asserting that Japan has been goaded into taking extreme measures by the "provocations" of the League of Nations! The *Temps,* by the way, at first called on the League Council to refuse to act on the Chinese demand for the application of Articles 10 and 15 of the League Covenant, although such a refusal would have been itself a violation of the Covenant, as even Paul-Boncour was obliged to point out to the Japanese on the Council.

The theory of the French Government as expounded by its tied press is that Article 16 of the Covenant, concerning sanctions, cannot be applied because a state of war does not exist. Thus we have it laid down that a member of the League of Nations may make war with impunity so long as it does not formally declare it. And the nation attacked must not declare war to enable the Council to act on Article 16, for by so doing it would become the "aggressor." It is just to say that this theory was propounded during the session of the League Council in Paris by Sir John Simon, the British Foreign Minister, whose skilful interpretations of the Covenant reduced that document to a "scrap of paper." Among other things Simon held that the Council was powerless to declare one of its own members to be the "aggressor" under Article 10 without the consent of the member in question. Thus the article that Wilson described as "the heart of the Covenant" becomes inoperative in any dispute between Powers represented on the Council. If the governments of the great Powers of Europe had desired to destroy the League of Nations they could not have acted otherwise.

Most significant of all, perhaps, is the attitude of some of the "Briandist" papers here. The *Volonté* has hinted that Briand's "European Union" is much to be preferred to the League of Nations. This throws light on the real motives of Briand's proposal. Herriot, in an article in the *Ere Nouvelle,* has suggested that France has been too scrupulous in fulfilling her international obligations, while other nations neglect them, and that the time has come for her to pursue a "national" policy. It seems to most outsiders that that is what she has been doing for the last thirteen years. The *Ere Nouvelle* has followed Herriot's line in a leader, on the excuse that England and the United States have reduced the League of Nations to impotence. As for the *République,* which has hitherto been looked upon as an organ of the left-wing Radicals, it throws to the winds French obligations under the Covenant—which, be it remembered, is part of the Treaty of Versailles—declares that France has no interest in the Sino-Japanese conflict provided that the safety of Indo-China is secured, and that, as America will no doubt be much occupied in Asia, now is the time to blackmail the Government of the United States to obtain the cancelation of the war debts. It is just to say that the *Œuvre,* which has hitherto been silent about the Shanghai affair, has a leader this morning insisting on the suicidal folly of holding aloof and pointing out that the whole problem of the Pacific is involved. This increases the number of Parisian papers that have protested against the action of Japan to six, the others being the *Populaire* and the *Soir* (Socialist), the *Humanité* (Communist), the *Peuple* (trade unionist), and a Conservative nationalist paper, the *Journal des Débats.*

The view of the man in the street seems to be that a war between China and Japan would be good for business, as France could supply both belligerents with war material and other supplies. There are, however, signs that the very full and objective accounts of Japanese savagery at Shanghai telegraphed to the Parisian newspapers are having an effect

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on public opinion and causing an anti-Japanese reaction.

The French official attitude as reflected in the press seems to me incomprehensible and, indeed, almost insane except on the hypothesis of a Franco-Japanese understanding. Apart from the danger of Japanese militarism to the French Asiatic colonies and to French prestige in Asia—for of what value are any guaranties that Japan may have given in regard to Indo-China?—by their attitude in this matter the French are undermining their whole thesis of guaranties of "security." They are going to say at the disarmament conference that they will consent to no reduction of armaments without an organized system of mutual guaranties and a strengthening of "sanctions," either by a revival of the Geneva Protocol of 1924 or by drastic amendment of Articles 15 and 16 of the League Covenant, or both. Of what use will further "sanctions" be if, as in the present case, the great Powers have not the courage to apply those that already exist or even to go to the length of breaking off diplomatic relations with an "aggressor"? How dangerous a precedent has been set by the theories that war is not war until it is formally declared and that the League Council can take no effective action against one of its own members! Have the French reflected on the possible applications of these theories to Europe? They are a direct encouragement to the Hitlerites, if ever they come into power in Germany and have the necessary military strength (as is doubtful), to walk into the Polish Corridor without declaring war. And if the Hitlerites did this, it is doubtful whether France could invade Germany to go to the aid of Poland without violating the Treaty of Locarno.

Without the hypothesis of a Franco-Japanese understanding, the French attitude is, as I have said, incomprehensible. But what would be the motive from the French point of view of such an understanding? It has been suggested that the consideration is Japanese support for French policy at the disarmament conference, but that seems to me insufficient. Japan would in any case have refused to reduce her armaments. The Japanese Government declares them to be already inadequate and claims the right to increase them. It is much more probable that France wishes China to come under Japanese domination so as to exclude the influence of Russia. And if the Japanese enterprise led, as it almost certainly would if allowed to go on, to war between Japan and Russia and the consequent interruption of the Five-Year Plan, that would not perhaps be profoundly regretted in Paris. Briand's "European Union" scheme was in its intention anti-Russian and no doubt also anti-American. Briand fought hard to keep Russia out of it and yielded only when he was obliged to yield. Another scheme, closely connected with that of Briand and strongly supported in France —Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's "Pan-Europe"—was quite definitely aimed, in the intention of its author, against Russia on the one hand and England and America on the other. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi has recently published a pamphlet with the title "Stalin & Co.," which leaves no doubt about his aims. He calls on all the other European countries and on all Europeans, whether Socialists or capitalists, nationalists or internationalists, democrats or fascists, to unite against Soviet Russia. They are to suppress the Communist Party and all Communist propaganda in every country, to organize a joint economic boycott of Russia, and to form a "Council of European Defense" for the purpose of organizing an "army of the European alliance" to make war on Russia and put an end to bolshevism and the Five-Year Plan. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, who has been staying in Paris, was received yesterday (February 1) by M. Roustan, Minister of Public Instruction, in the company of the Rumanian ex-Minister, John Petrovici. One would have thought that he would have gone to the Ministry of War—perhaps he did.

It is also probable that, as the *République* hinted in the article already mentioned, official France would see without regret complications between Japan and the United States. In any case it is clear that, whether there is a formal understanding or not, France is backing Japan. As I write comes the news of the announcement at the Council meeting at Geneva this afternoon of the joint intervention of America and England to stop hostilities. May it be the beginning of a wiser policy!

The Workers Demand—

By FELIX MORROW

FEBRUARY 4 was National Unemployment Insurance Day. In a hundred cities and towns there were organized demonstrations against the starvation decrees of government and employing class. All-day rains in New York and Philadelphia, blizzards in Boston, Chicago, and Detroit, and snow in the Middle West cut into the size of the demonstrations, but they were impressive enough. The New York *Times* said: "Veteran police officials who have handled many such demonstrations commented that yesterday's seemed better organized and more vociferous than previous rallies. They expected that the rain would cut the demonstration down considerably and were astonished at the large numbers who marched in it for hours." There were the usual police clubbings and arrests, particularly in Pittsburgh, Newcastle, Philadelphia, and McKeesport, an old strike town, where 10,000 townsfolk battled against the police. In Minneapolis the Farmer-Labor mayor smashed the demonstration. The most significant fact about the demonstrations was the spread of the unemployed movement to the smaller cities and towns, particularly in the South and the far West.

The nation-wide demonstrations and the earlier National Hunger March to Washington, not to speak of more than a score of State and city marches and demonstrations, were organized by the National Committee of Unemployed Councils and supported by the Communist Party, which also initiated the organization of the Unemployed Councils. But the unemployed movement is not a Communist movement, though led by Communists. It is designed to be a broad united-front organization, based on the central issue of unemployment insurance—an issue with revolutionary implications, it is true, for victory will require the building of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

powerful mass movement for a terrific struggle, and fulfilment of its demands will require fundamental concessions from capitalism; but an issue, nevertheless, for which non-Communists will fight. To the Unemployed Councils are rallying Simon-pure trade unionists as well as class-conscious radicals, the aristocracy of labor as well as the lowest stratum of marginal laborers; and, for the first time in America, a militant working-class demand is meeting with the sympathy of the intellectual and lower middle classes.

Committees affiliated with the Unemployed Councils fight for acceptance of its program in trade unions, fraternal organizations, workers' clubs. But the main work of the councils is to gain the support of employed and unemployed by leading them in struggles for even more immediate needs. Committees are organized in flophouses and bread lines to fight for better food and treatment. Housewives' committees uncover the worst cases of destitution, and demonstrations are staged before local charity agencies to force them to act. This part of the work has been so efficient that some relief agencies, among them the New York Home Relief bureaus, have offered to give preference to cases sent by the Unemployed Councils. I have seen a letter from the local Home Relief Bureau to the lower Harlem Unemployed Council to this effect; the letter assumed, with typical bureaucratic stupidity, that the council was a closed craft union catering to its own membership.

Free hot meals and shoes for poor school children are demanded from the local school authorities, and are being granted; though usually, as in New York, at the expense of the school teachers, who are levied on for this purpose. Evictions for non-payment of rent are fought by returning the furniture to the vacated rooms and then banding the other tenants together to strike if the landlord persists in evicting the destitute tenant. On the face of it, this method may not seem very effective, but it has worked beautifully in Detroit, Chicago, and New York. Perhaps the most promising activity of the Unemployed Councils is to organize and conduct rent strikes. The recent newspaper reports of successful rent strikes only presage a widespread use of this weapon.

How large the mass movement led by the Unemployed Councils promises to be may be realized if one considers that unemployment benefits are as vitally necessary to the employed as to the unemployed. The army of the destitute is a menace to the living standards of the employed. The A. F. of L. locals and central bodies who have repudiated the stand against unemployment insurance of the Vancouver convention have not suddenly turned radical. The nineteen New York locals which on January 27 declared for the insurance demands and for participation in the unemployment demonstrations are probably the same bona fide trade unionists that they were before the depression. But today trade unionism itself is at stake.

The radical trade unions of the Trade Union Unity League are less hurt by strike-breaking, since their strike demands are always tied up with the demands of the unemployed—relief, insurance, no overtime, seven-hour day, and five-day week to provide work for the unemployed. In radical strikes large numbers of unemployed are always to be found on the picket lines. But even the Trade Union Unity League cannot prevent starving men from strike-breaking. The conservative unions are infinitely worse off. The old business unionism has no basis on which to appeal for cooperation from the unemployed. It is for this reason, not to speak of the pressure of the one-third of their members that are unemployed, that some of the most reactionary sections of labor, such as the typographical workers of New York, have supported the unemployment-insurance bill. How strongly many conservative workers feel about it was evidenced during the hunger march, when in many towns they fought off the suppressive measures of the police.

But it is not only the whole working class of America which needs the bill. The lower middle classes, those who make their living directly from the workers—small shopkeepers, small landlords—are discovering that it is also necessary for their welfare. The swift contraction of the living standards of the working class has ruined many shopkeepers and landlords and will ruin many more. Workers simply do not buy, not even foodstuffs. Nor, to an amazing extent, are they paying rent; and the policy of local officials of discouraging evictions for non-payment of rent, plus the activities of the Unemployed Councils in fighting evictions and calling rent strikes, is driving many landlords to the wall. Their only hope lies in the workers receiving unemployment benefits.

There is another class which, I think, is being drawn into the fight for insurance, and this class, though small, is highly vocal. A large part of the professional class—doctors, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers, musicians—is badly hit by the contraction of working-class standards. But they, it is too often forgotten, have other reasons, besides those immediately economic, for hating capitalism and supporting the working class. In a world where conspicuous consumption is the ruling-class standard, the professional class is the lackey of ignoramuses; the learned professions and the arts seem particularly irrelevant when a large part of the population suffers poverty and starvation. With a kind of bitter reluctance men like Edmund Wilson are showing the way to their generation. The larger part of the professional class is not likely to go Communist, but it may be depended upon to support the establishment, through unemployment benefits, of a minimum standard of living.

The unemployment-benefit program of the Unemployed Councils differs from other suggested plans in many ways. European systems of unemployment insurance have shown that institution of insurance by industries has meant the barring from benefits of large sections of the working class—agricultural laborers, fishery workers, those employed in many seasonal industries, railroad workers in England, and so on. Consequently the plan of the Unemployed Councils is designed to apply to all wage-earners without exception. The plan must also be on a national basis, for to stop at State lines would mean, for instance, that Michigan would be unable to levy on New York and Chicago capitalists who have waxed fat over many years on Detroit automobile workers. It is also demanded that the government and the employing class together shoulder the costs of unemployment benefits; for to elicit contributions from workers means to cut down the actual unemployment benefits, to pass on a large part of the burden to the skimpy wages of those still employed, and to bar from the benefits those young people who have been unable to begin working. The system of benefits is also to be under the control of workers' committees, a demand given point by recent happenings in Eng-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

land. As in Tammany's distribution of relief jobs, the English bureaucracy put on the lists many who did not need the dole, and workers ignorant of their rights or awed by the machinery of appeal were dropped. After which, in the drive to contract the insurance fund, the unworthy cases were used as a front to cover up the merciless slashing from the list of thousands of deserving workers.

The demand of the Unemployed Councils for insurance at full wages is the one most likely to seem unreasonable. It does seem a great deal if one thinks only of the small aristocracy of labor. It must be remembered, however, that the average wage of the mass of workers—33,000,000 of them—even during the halcyon years before the depression, was less than $25 weekly. Compare this sum with the minimum annual family budget prepared by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, computed for 1930, which would require at the lowest $2,024 in Schenectady and $2,468 in San Francisco. On these figures it is a mystery how most American families manage to live at all. Even the Charity Organization Society of New York recently computed that $25 weekly is the minimum required to maintain in health and decency *dependent families*. Add to this that no thinking person believes any longer that unemployment is a temporary phenomenon. Even in the most favorable year of 1927 over two million persons were unemployed. It is undeniable that the dynamics of American economics is slowing up. A considerable percentage of the ten to twelve million persons at present unemployed will perhaps never again find work. A whole generation must be kept alive. On the evidence of these facts the demand for unemployment insurance at full wages is the minimum basis for a self-respecting working-class movement.

Court Reform—A Job for Laymen

By I. MAURICE WORMSER

THE various highly touted law-reform movements, led by judges and lawyers, which have been descending "from Dan to Beersheba" in the last few years, reached the nethermost suburbs of the latter place the other day when a former bar-association president admitted: "Our courts as at present constituted are entirely inadequate to cope with modern conditions—they function and operate through legal machinery which was outmoded and obsolete many years ago"; and when an appellate justice warned a federation of lawyers' associations that "unless something were done about the administration of justice the public would revolt."

Apart from the moderation of their language, it cannot honestly be denied that there has been an increasing sense of disgust among business people with the juridical process; that the delays are shocking; that the scandals are unsavory; that the various and abundant technicalities and red tape result frequently in a complete denial of justice; that there has been no really substantial improvement in court procedure, in New York at least, in over a generation; that the community feels that our legal machinery is out of step with the needs of twentieth-century developments; and that too often the law itself, instead of being a part of life, is apart from life.

The Merchants' Association of New York stated in December, 1931, that "the calendars of many of our trial courts are so long as to make it impossible in some sections of the State for a case to be reached for trial within a period of from sixteen months to more than two years from the time that the cause is brought to issue." Of course it is usually several weeks before issue is joined. A lawyers' service bureau in New York City reports that it takes about a year and a half to reach a case at jury trial term of the Supreme Court, New York County; three years in Kings County; two years and nine months in Bronx County; and three years in Queens County. That in the City Court, New York County, the delay on the general trial calendar is three years; three years eleven months in Kings County; two years eleven months in Bronx County; and three years in Queens County. That in the Municipal Court of New York—the poor man's court, where surely, if anywhere, justice should not lag—one jury part in Manhattan is a year and a half in arrears, and another a year and two months. But in Brooklyn the situation is even more serious; there some of the jury parts are as much as two years five months, and two years eight months, in arrears. And in Bronx County, to cap the climax, the jury part in one district is three years six months behind. Such shameful delays are of course a denial of justice.

The second fundamental evil is the lack of an efficient and business-like supervision and control of the administration of justice. There is nothing to prevent a judge from declaring a recess at any time, perhaps for only a day or two, possibly for a week or more, without assigning any reason or being held amenable to any authority. Instances are not lacking of judges who have gone away to summer climes during the busiest weeks of the winter, though they have long summer vacations; and in the meantime, of course, the people must and do pay their large salaries. This is unbusiness-like and uneconomical, to say the least. Courts should run continuously to get cases out of the way. They should be held to render the same degree of efficiency as an up-to-date public-utility corporation. The methods of check-up on diligence, attendance, and output employed by a business executive should be adopted and unflinchingly enforced.

The third grave evil is that too many judges, however honest or learned, suffer from a social astigmatism in regard to procedural reform. Mr. Elihu Root has said: "Everybody knows that the vast network of highly technical rules of evidence and procedure which prevails in this country serves to tangle justice in the name of form. It is a disgrace to our profession. It is a disgrace to our law, and a disgrace to our institutions." To this emphatic language from a conservative source nothing can be added, except to quote from the English humorist, A. P. Herbert, to whose little volume, "Misleading Cases in the Common Law," Lord Hewart, then Chief Justice of England, wrote an introduction. Herbert refers to Chapter 29 of Magna Carta, "To no man

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will we sell, to no man deny, to no man delay, justice or right," and appends this comment: "But we in this court are well aware that these undertakings have very little relation to the harsh facts of experience. It is the whole business of the honorable profession of the law to sell, delay, and deny justice—to sell it to those who can afford it, to delay it if the client has money, and deny it if he has not; and many of us wish that we could sell more justice than we do."

Nowadays public criticism of the legal process is assuming a far more serious aspect than in the Pollyanna era. *La crise* is making its reverberations felt on all sides, and the field of the law is no longer immune. The necessity for reform has reached such a high point that nobody can ignore it. The feeling of disrespect for law and the courts seems to be growing steadily.

The bench and bar have had ample opportunity to reform their creaking machinery, anachronistic trial survivals, outdated practice, and general policy of drift. It is amazing that in the year 1931 a committee of lawyers, in referring to the scandalous delays in the lower courts, should merely report that "some plan to expedite the trial of jury cases, and thereby to relieve the congestion due to crowded calendars, is sure to be found." The stock "remedy" of course was advanced—"increasing the number of judges." Can the public be blamed if it feels nausea? Yet our legal Neros continue to fiddle—and even their fiddling isn't done any too well. Every comprehensive plan of law reform has been scuttled or disregarded by the legal fraternity, with the consequence that the man in the street, who is more observant than lawyers think he is, has become justly cynical. He has noted that a "clubby" spirit pervades the lawyers' associations; that they are operated on the line of guilds; that they hold back when they should step forward bravely; and that the bar and bench, altogether complacent with a very few outstanding exceptions, look upon legal reform as involving a "sacrifice."

In England many years ago it came to be seen that law reform could not safely be left to lawyers and judges, that their reports were mere pretenses, that their suggestions were futilities; and thereupon the laymen stepped in and turned the matter of remedies over to public, not professional, control. In this country our lawyers and judges, who have been dominating the attempts at law reform for the past generation, seem to accomplish practically nothing except to please themselves. The laity is in a state of despair. It is now high time, therefore, to give the layman his chance, since it has become apparent that real judicial reform must come elsewhere than from the bench and bar, which have tried again and again and have failed. Indeed, it is not certain that they really desire to succeed, for their seed may not be designed to be truly fruitful. The laity must point out the curatives—not mere palliatives—for the defects and failures of our existing system, must seek their adoption, and insist upon their enforcement in good faith. True reform must come from the outside—preferably from a committee composed of leaders of the business community, including representatives of labor as well as of capital, aided by lawyers on purely technical matters. They will make suggestions which will put our law and procedure on a business-like basis. This will insure the community a chance at least to see the horses run. In a contest between justice and outworn nonsense, justice should be given a sporting chance.

The layman *can* bring about law reform: first, by insisting upon the enactment of legislation which will unify the entire judicial system of each State and place it under the control of a centralized tribunal—the Council of Justice—charged with the duty to supervise and control, in all respects, the administration of justice. To insure its freedom from the dogmatism and narrowness of legalistic authoritarians, this council should consist of five representatives, one from each of the following classes: invested capital; labor unions; the sociological and economic thought of the hour; business men familiar with the customs of commerce and trade arbitration; and the bar. This council would be obligated to make thorough investigations, at periodic intervals, of all courts in the State, with a view to making them run more efficiently, more honestly, and on a more business-like basis. The council also should be vested with authority to supervise the work of judges and recommend to the legislature or other appropriate body the removal of judges wanting in capacity, honor, or both. It is commonly asserted that instances are not lacking where grave injustice has been done to litigants because of the use of "fixers," "influence," and ulterior considerations. For the first time in the history of this State the Council of Justice would present an official organization to which the man in the street could take his just grievances.

Secondly, the layman can make it his business to see that the selection of the judiciary shall be dug out by the roots from the realm of machine politics. To attain this reform would require constitutional amendments in most States. Judges should not be voted for at the regular elections, but at special times fixed for that purpose. They should be nominated by petition and appear on the ballot without party designation of any nature, and in every instance, before the name shall appear upon the ballot, the antecedent written approval of the integrity and capacity of the nominee by the Council of Justice must be made mandatory. This proviso would compel the candidate to submit to a complete "showdown" of his record and attainments. Provision must be made for publishing in all newspapers exceeding a given circulation, during a stated period of weeks, the name and address of every proposed nominee, so that the public may become acquainted with the aspirants and communicate with the council and inform it fully. The somewhat perfunctory approval or disapproval by bar-association groups after the nominations have been made, under the present system, amounts to little or nothing, and the public very shrewdly does not even take it seriously. So also, where there occurs an unexpired term, no appointment should be filled without the antecedent written approval of the designee, as to both ability and character, by the Council of Justice.

Of one thing I am sure—that the lawyer or judge alone cannot reform the process. He is as a rule too bedeviled by the withering blight of the remote past, of antiquated procedural precedents, and of moth-eaten technicalities. Like Lavinia, haunted by the dead Mannons, he says: "I'll have the shutters nailed close so no sunlight can ever come in. I'll live alone with the dead, and keep their secrets, and let them hound me."

It therefore must be the task of intelligent laymen to let the "sunlight" in, and it is to them that a bewildered and perplexed generation must come for guidance out of the catacombs of legal obscurities, procedural technicalities, expense, anachronisms, and delays.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Government by Ordinance in India

By A. FENNER BROCKWAY

London, January 20

ONE of the strongest arguments against the rule of India by Britain is that, in the very nature of things, the British people are ignorant of what that rule consists in. The population of Britain has enough problems of its own. The working class are wondering how they are going to live on reduced wages and unemployment benefits. The middle class are wondering how they are going to pay their income tax. It is not to be expected that they should show much concern about the problems of a people 7,000 miles distant.

The average British citizen has little or no sense of responsibility toward India. The traditional British view has been to leave such matters to the "man on the spot." Occasionally the newspapers report something startling. Then one man in the railway carriage will remark to his neighbor, "I see that silly old man, Gandhi, is making trouble again," and conversation will turn to his loin cloth. There are only two sections of the British people who have any real interest in India—the keen Socialists and the keen imperialists, both of whom are, of course, except at election times, insignificant minorities. Perhaps there is a third section—the Lancashire population engaged in the cotton industry. They are concerned about their loss of trade. During the past few weeks the newspapers have given exceptional space to India, though still much less than the American newspapers give. But British public opinion is still quite hazy as to what is occurring. The average man knows that some Indians have been in London at some kind of conference and that as soon as Gandhi got back to India trouble began again. He knows that there is some difficulty about what kind of government India should have, but little more. He reads of ordinances being promulgated, but if one asked him what an ordinance is he would not know, and as to what promulgation is—!

But there is some excuse for the average man. There are not three newspaper editors in London who at this moment know the terms of the new Indian ordinances. The latest Bengal ordinance was published in Calcutta last October. Three weeks ago there was not a copy in England outside the walls of the India Office! My friend Reginald Reynolds, the young Quaker who delivered Gandhi's final message to Lord Irwin, before the civil-disobedience campaign of 1930, scoured London for a copy in vain. Finally, he succeeded in securing a loan of a copy from the Secretary of State. Yet this ordinance, issued in the name of the British people, embodies principles against which all the honored pioneers of British democracy have fought!

The Bengal ordinance is political terrorism beyond anything which the Fascists are imposing in Italy or the Bolshevists in Russia. Here are a few of the provisions of the first chapter of the ordinance:

1. The Government assumes power to commandeer any property, movable or immovable, for its use—land, houses, furniture, vehicles, etc.
2. The District Official may award such compensation as he thinks reasonable. There is no obligation to award any compensation.
3. Various specified classes in the community, including teachers, may be conscripted to assist the Government in the maintenance of "law and order" or in the protection of government property.
4. Collective fines may be imposed on the inhabitants of areas concerned in the commission of a scheduled list of offenses.
5. No civil or criminal proceedings are allowed against any action taken under the ordinance or "in good faith intended to be done" under the ordinance.

The second chapter of the ordinance sets up tribunals for the trial of political offenses. These are the main characteristics of the tribunals:

1. The special tribunals are to consist of three persons.
2. A majority verdict is to prevail.
3. The tribunals may meet *in camera*.
4. Sentences of transportation for life and of death may be given.
5. Accused persons may be tried in their absence.
6. No appeal is allowed.

The avowed object of this ordinance was to suppress a "terrorist" movement in Bengal. It was promulgated before the Round Table Conference in London had dispersed. I was with Mr. Gandhi when he received news of the ordinance, and he feared immediately that it meant the end of the truce between the British Government and the National Congress. Then came news of repressive ordinances to suppress the discontent in the Northwest Frontier Province and the rent strike in the United Provinces. They had a most depressing effect upon Mr. Gandhi. Despite the disappointments of the Round Table Conference, he still had hope. He trusted the honesty of purpose of Sir Samuel Hoare, the Conservative Secretary of State, though he recognized the distance which separated their views. While there was sincerity on each side he felt that the door to cooperation was still open.

The Bengal ordinance has been extended to Bombay, and the Northwest Frontier Province ordinances have been extended to a large part of India. Before describing them, reference should be made to the Rent Strike Ordinance, which at the moment of writing is limited to the United Provinces, though its extension to Gujerat, in the Bombay Province, is anticipated.

The rent strike has both a political and an economic motive. It has a political motive because the British Government in India is, in the last resort, the possessor of all land. In certain parts of India the peasants pay direct to the revenue-collectors; in other parts they pay to the "zemindars" (large landholders), who transfer approximately 50 per cent of their takings to the government. The latter system is particularly hard on the peasants, because the zemindars have the power to increase their land charges, irrespective of what they pass on to the authorities. But during the last year, owing to the fall in the prices of grain,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the peasants have found the demands of both the zemindars and the revenue-collectors intolerable, and an economic motive for refusal of land payments has been added to the political.

The rent strike spread like a prairie fire over the United Provinces. The government agreed to reduce rents to the level of 1901, when prices were similar to those of this year, but the rent strike continued. A special ordinance was therefore issued on December 14, enabling the authorities to arrest anyone withholding rent or inciting others to withhold rent, and to sentence them to two years of rigorous imprisonment. It was under this ordinance that Jawaharlal Nehru, the most influential of the younger leaders of the Congress cause, was arrested for attempting to leave Ahmedabad, when this had been prohibited. He had been a prominent advocate of the rent strike. He was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment and fined 500 rupees. This ordinance will undoubtedly be used extensively by the Government if the refusal of land payments spreads to other parts of India.

The Northwest Frontier ordinances were promulgated on December 14 and were known as the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance and the Unlawful Associations Ordinances. They were originally issued to meet the activities of the "Red Shirts," a formidable, though avowedly non-violent, organization, loosely associated with the Indian National Congress and whole-heartedly supporting its aims, but largely uninfluenced by its discipline, owing to distance and racial and religious independence. To the Red Shirts the spirit of the truce meant little; they carried on their agitation for independence and strengthened their organization, in readiness for the renewed struggle. Accordingly the British authorities assumed power to suppress their organization, to arrest their leaders, and to arrest anyone instigating resistance to British rule.

This Unlawful Instigation Ordinance has since been extended to Madras, Bombay, the Punjab, and Bihar and Orissa; the Unlawful Associations Ordinances, to Madras, Bengal, Bombay, the United Provinces, and Bihar and Orissa. It is under the latter ordinance that the Congress has been declared an illegal organization. During the civil-disobedience campaign of 1930 Congress was an illegal organization in some parts of India but legal in others. The head office of the Congress at Allahabad remained open during the whole of the campaign; for instance, the Working Committee met there unmolested. In Bombay, however, where the Congress was outlawed, the premises were seized and the members of the Congress Committee were arrested almost as soon as they were appointed. It is characteristic of the greater thoroughness with which the Government is now attempting to suppress the Congress movement that it has applied this ordinance to practically every part of British India. The members of the All-India Working Committee, as well as of the district and local committees, are being arrested *en bloc*.

A third ordinance—the Prevention of Molestation and Boycotting Ordinance—applies to the whole of British India. The ordinance which was in operation in Bombay during the 1930 campaign has been extended to include peaceful picketing, as well as actual molestation. Congress supporters have even been arrested for sitting outside shops selling British goods, though they have remained silent and motionless. Their presence is regarded as an offense!

The most inclusive of the ordinances is the Emergency Powers Ordinance of January 3. It is being applied steadily to all parts of India. It gives the British authorities virtual power to conscript both property and persons. It provides for the commandeering of transport, the restriction of communications and movements; it gives rights of search, the right to arrest suspected persons and to restrict them to certain areas; it enables the authorities to take possession of buildings for government service or for the accommodation of troops or police; it applies compulsion to certain persons, such as the headmen of villages, to maintain "law and order"; it authorizes the collection of "collective fines"; and it gives power to suppress newspapers and to confiscate their printing plant. It is the kind of measure which an invading military commander applies to an occupied territory during war.

This is how Britain is ruling India. What do the British people think of it? The extreme Conservatives are jubilant. At last they see the "strong hand" which they have been demanding. The moderate Conservatives, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and the governmental Liberals are more restrained. They argue that the ordinances are necessary to crush an "unconstitutional movement"—as though any democratic movement can be "constitutional" when self-government does not exist!—and they emphasize that the Round Table Conference policy is to be continued—as though it can be anything but a farce with Mr. Gandhi in prison! The Liberal press is cautiously disturbed, not daring to say much in criticism, though pointing out that "force is no solution." The Labor Party is indignant—forgetting that a Labor Government authorized the imprisonment of Mr. Gandhi and 60,000 of his followers in 1930! The I. L. P. supplements its indignation by whole-heartedly supporting India's claim to independence and by urging the Indian people to persist until social and economic freedom is won, as well as political freedom.

In the Driftway

MARRIAGE is a subject on which the Drifter has no fixed judgments. Although he has considerable information on the matter, gleaned from various sources, the sum total of his actual knowledge is small. About slavery, also, he knows very little, though the orthodox opinions have been long familiar to him. The following item, however, which pertains to both marriage and slavery, is worth commenting on. It is a formula for slave marriage, devised by the Reverend Samuel Phillips of Andover, Massachusetts, in the middle of the eighteenth century.

> You S. do now in the presence of God, and these witnesses, take R. to be your wife; promising that so far as shall be consistent with the relation which you now sustain, as a servant, you will perform the part of a husband towards her; and in particular you promise that you will love her; and that, as you shall have the opportunity and ability, you will take a proper care of her in sickness and health, in prosperity and adversity; and that you will be true and faithful to her, and will cleave to her only, so long as God in his Providence shall continue your and her abode in such place (or places) as that you can consistently come together.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THERE is a refreshing realism about this document which might very well be more often imitated. Whom God hath joined, say the Scriptures—let none but man put asunder. Let nothing but the exigencies of an unjust world, the hard, unyielding facts of economic necessity, poverty, the need of labor, the obligation to serve a master—let nothing but these impair this marriage duly contracted in the presence of God and of these witnesses. What, the Drifter asks, is wrong with this ceremony? Is it not better, the world being what it is, than the vow without exception which young men and women take to cleave one to the other until death do them part? The Reverend Samuel Phillips merely recognized the plain fact that many things might part man and wife besides death. And for his unfortunate slaves, therefore, he invented a better formula than the one he doubtless employed for his free white parishioners.

* * * * *

NOR is the Reverend Mr. Phillips the only marital realist. In Chihuahua, across the Texas border from El Paso, it is now possible to obtain a divorce by mutual consent with only one day's notice, and without either of the parties being compelled to appear. However, these divorces are not granted to persons who have been married less than a year. In other words, while the state of Chihuahua recognizes that divorce is often desirable and should be granted freely at the will of both parties, it is aware also that many a quarrel arising during the first months of marriage ends in the fondest of reconciliations in less than twenty-four hours. The first time a young husband comes home late for dinner, the first time a young wife leaves her husband's home for her father's, the first difference over money, the first sharp clash of taste and acrimonious exchange of mutual disrespect—these are not, in the opinion of the wise Chihuahuan judges, grounds for irrevocable rupture of the marriage vow. The Drifter, having observed a number of marriages in various stages of agreement, can only bow to this superior wisdom. One swallow does not make a summer—but beware the whole flock! After them is all too likely to come the winter of discontent.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

War—in India and Outside

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It is difficult to understand in what way you imagine that your article entitled War in India, in the issue of January 13, is going to help the cause of world peace. You write of the present struggle in India as if it could terminate in only one way—"the end of British control in India." You produce no evidence for this assertion, nor does your article show appreciation of the fact that the British Government is assured of the support of liberal opinion in India in the furtherance of the constitutional changes proposed by the Round Table Conference. Are we to assume that *The Nation* is in favor of assassination of British officers as a legitimate political weapon in the cause of Indian nationalism? We have witnessed in the last few weeks the murder of an Englishman, Mr. Stevens, who was known to be sympathetic to Indian aspirations, by two high-school Indian girls. This is the first time in the Indian political movement that Indian women have indulged in terrorism of this nature.

You may say that Mr. Gandhi is not responsible for acts of terrorism, and, indeed, you quote his saying that the Congress method of winning India's freedom is "truth and non-violence." The fact remains, however, that nowhere has the Indian National Congress under its present administration spoken decisively against terrorism. There has been from time to time grudging disapproval of specific acts; but notwithstanding lip service to the creed of non-violence, in more than one instance Congress has publicly expressed its admiration of what it is pleased to call the "martyr spirit" that has led misguided young Indian men and women to indulge in assassination of individuals.

What civilized government in the world, even including the enlightened administration of the United States of America, would tolerate for a single moment a parallel authority to its own in the sphere of general law and order? The following extract from the statement issued by the Government of India on January 5, 1932, would be subscribed to by all those who have not allowed their love of pacifism to overrule their regard for constitutional progress:

> The peaceful progress of India depends on the maintenance of the authority of government, whatever that government may be, and of respect for the law, and the present Government of India would fail lamentably in their obligations to their successors if, during the period of transition, they allowed this fundamental principle to go by default, or were content to permit the usurpation of their functions by any political organization. An issue of hardly less importance is whether a political organization is to be allowed by lawless means to impose its will on the public, large sections of which deny its authority and oppose its pretensions. Government would fail in their duty were they to countenance the claims of Congress to control and domination, or permit them in effect to assume the position of a parallel government.

Mr. Gandhi is a publicity expert of the first order, and no doubt it is for this reason, more than any other, that foreign observers seem to labor under the impression that he is the sole exponent of India's legitimate claims. He may certainly be considered, as a religious teacher, to hold a unique position in the modern world, but his political aptitude has been questioned by more than one competent Indian authority. You mention his declaration: "We are prepared to sacrifice all." What exactly has he sacrificed? His ascetic life may be admired, but that is a personal matter. A real sacrifice would be if he responded to Mr. Sastri's appeal at the conclusion of the second session of the Round Table Conference, and harnessed his great gifts to the constructive work of the nation. Some of us think that his teaching of non-violence is an emasculating factor in the building up of a true national life in India.

London, January 21 BASIL P. HOWELL

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Lord Willingdon is reported to have said that "no self-respecting government could afford to ignore Gandhi's challenge." No one expects the British Government in India to ignore the present situation, but there are different ways of responding to it. So far, the response to civil disobedience, which has remained amazingly non-violent in view of the intensity of the feelings involved, has been the establishment of a "legal" reign of terror. Life pensions have been announced as available for informers. Political prisoners are given hard labor or deported. A man can be indefinitely imprisoned without charge preferred, or condemned to death *in absentia* on the basis of a police report alone; and while, in Britain, the slogan "Buy British" is everywhere proclaimed, in India children have been condemned to years of imprisonment or to the lash for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peaceful picketing. These are not the acts of a self-respecting government, but of one driven by blind rage and fear. One does not know how many English officials are still living only as a consequence of Indian reluctance to take life; one does feel that the British are hoping to break down this patience so that they may have an excuse to use their rifles and bombs on unarmed crowds. English diehards have repeatedly admitted that England cannot "afford" to lose India; at the same time they have made it impossible that anything else should happen.

What, if anything, can be done here? We cannot expect the American government to interfere in British "domestic affairs," however scandalous. But would it not be helpful to publish and distribute here some of the recent ordinances, together with a few examples of ferocious penalties inflicted on children, and then to prepare an open letter of protest, such as one cannot doubt that a few hundred of the most distinguished Americans would be glad to sign in their individual capacity?

Boston, January 29 ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

A Note from Pineville, Kentucky

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In my article on the Kentucky mine strike on February 3 there are two errors: (1) I stated that Allan Taub was "released on the second day" after his arrest, when actually he was held a prisoner for eight days, from January 6 to January 14. (2) Through my own lack of exact information I made it seem, in the article, that Taub merely refused to answer the question "Do you believe in God?" for personal reasons, whereas his objection to the question, which concerned not only one but all the defendants involved, was that according to the Kentucky law of evidence such a question could not be asked.

In a letter to me calling attention to these inaccuracies, Mr. Taub adds:

> You may also be interested to know that on January 24, when I tried to return to Pineville, I was stopped on the highway outside of the town by about seven deputies armed with high-powered shotguns. After I protested, a telephone call was made to the mayor by one of the deputies. In a few minutes two carloads of officers and deputies—about fourteen of them—arrived, armed with submachine-guns and high-powered shotguns, and headed by the mayor and chief of police. I was ordered to leave, and was informed that if I ever wished to return I would first have to get permission from the mayor.
>
> However, I did return a few days later (without asking anyone's permission to do so), and have been here for the past six days.

New York, February 9 OAKLEY JOHNSON

The Madness of Moderation

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The radicals of this country are lucky! If they controlled a party like the British Labor Party, history would repeat itself—victory followed by total smash-up. Treacherous leadership merely contributed to the British radical collapse. The fundamental cause was lack of audacity.

This madness of moderation runs all through your recent dictatorship symposium. Not one of the contributors seemed to have the faintest realization of what a desperate situation a radical government would face. Ten million men, we are told, are unemployed. Can anyone doubt that the shock of a radical triumph at the polls would double this number? How are all these men to be given work? The only idea I have been able to glean from your symposium is that the government should finance public works by means of bond issues. Bond issues, to the extent of many billions, by a government that is already going bankrupt!

East Jordan, Mich., January 28 F. H. FOOTE

Contributors to This Issue

LOUIS FISCHER, Moscow correspondent of *The Nation*, is the author of "Why Recognize Russia?"

ROBERT DELL has for many years been the Paris correspondent of *The Nation* and the *Manchester Guardian*.

FELIX MORROW has contributed articles to the *New Republic*, *Symposium*, and *Menorah Journal*.

I. MAURICE WORMSER is editor of the New York *Law Journal* and author of "Frankenstein Incorporated."

A. FENNER BROCKWAY is author of "The Government of India" and "A Week in India," and editor of the *New Leader*.

EDA LOU WALTON is author of "Jane Matthew and Other Poems."

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES is an English writer now living in the United States.

JOHN MACY is the editor of the recently published symposium, "American Writers on American Literature."

AMOS PINCHOT is a New York lawyer and publicist.

ARTHUR WARNER, a contributing editor of *The Nation*, is author of "A Landlubber's Log."

ROBERT REINHART is the secretary of the International Committee for Political Prisoners.

Jewish Social Work a Career and Challenge

Do your criteria of a successful career include also the intangible values of inherent interest, stimulating contacts and social usefulness?

If so, then you should study the advantages of

Jewish Social Work as a Profession

Scholarships and Fellowships ranging from $150 to $1000 for each academic year are available for especially qualified students.

For full information, address

M. J. KARPF, Director

The Training School **For Jewish Social Work**

(A graduate school)

71 W. 47th St., New York City

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RUSSIAN TRAVEL MADE EASY

In visiting Russia, you want to travel as widely as you can, gain as many first hand impressions as you can, and know what your expenses will be. The Open Road has devoted five years to perfecting its organization in the U. S. S. R. Open Road representatives in Moscow and Leningrad know the travel facilities of the country, and the things worth seeing. They save you time and money. They help you to see what interests you most.

When inquiring for rates, please indicate whether you prefer to travel alone or in one of many specially constituted Open Road groups. Also, state what phase of Russian life interests you most. Round trip rates as low as $238.

The OPEN ROAD

Salmon Tower, 11 West 42nd Street, New York City

Cooperating in U. S. S. R. with INTOURIST

VARIETY of TOURS TO U. S. S. R.

at

REASONABLE COST

1. $198.50 Round trip including visas, 5 day tour in Russia, hotels, meals, guide, interpreter, etc.
2. $242.50—Dnieprostroi Tour—Leningrad, Moscow, Kharkoff, Dnieprostroi, Kiew—11 Days in Russia.
3. $598.00—Specially conducted tour through Constantinople, Odessa, Dnieprostroi, by steamer on the Dniepr, Kiew, Moscow, Leningrad—Starting in New York under the leadership of Dr. P. T. Swanish, linguist and expert tour leader.

Ask for our tours New York to Leningrad direct by steamer With cooperation of CUNARD LINE and INTOURIST

CHICAGO'S LABOR BANK

Amalgamated Trust and Savings Bank

111 W. Jackson Boulevard Chicago, Ill.

Finance

Why Commodity Prices Slump

THE depression is entering a new phase, characterized by a resumption of the decline in commodity prices. Last autumn the index number of the Bureau of Labor Statistics seemed to be in a stable condition; in November there was a decline of only a fraction of 1 per cent. During December, however, there was a drop of 3 per cent, followed by another of nearly 2½ per cent in January. A startling number of commodities, including raw sugar, copper, cocoa, zinc, hides, rubber, and several grains, have sold at the lowest prices on record. Rubber, which changed hands at 24 cents a pound in 1929, and at $1.12½ in 1913, went substantially below 4 cents. Copper is offered at 6¼ cents a pound, compared with approximately three times that figure within the last two years, and Rio coffee has almost exactly duplicated the performance of copper. Raw sugar has fallen from 3 cents in 1927 to less than 1 cent, while cocoa sells at 3¾ cents as against 20 cents in 1927.

Figures such as these furnish an ironic commentary on the statement, which in the early days of the depression attained the vogue of a slogan, that "business is fundamentally sound." The price record shows that business was unsound to the core, and that the mighty slump of 1920-21 was only the first step in the post-war process of deflation. Never before in the history of the country was an eight-year interval of stability after a collapse, such as that extending from 1921 to 1929, followed by a renewed slump. In previous boom periods, credit inflation was expressed in a rise in commodity prices; on this occasion it contented itself with holding prices steady through an enormous increase and diffusion of popular purchasing power—founded on borrowed money and stock-market profits. The tremors of the common-stock debacle are now reaching down to the roots of the rubber trees and coffee plants and to the deepest workings of the copper mines. The full force of the shock has been a long time in arriving at these obscure points; there is some reason to believe that it will exhaust itself here.

It seems fairly evident that this latest price slump traces directly back to the credit collapse in Europe of last summer and autumn. Raw products and foodstuffs have felt, in their turn, the paralyzing hand which monetary troubles have laid upon Europe's industry. But in addition, these commodities are especially sensitive to irregularities and instabilities in the foreign-exchange markets. They weigh heavily in international trade, hence their free movement depends upon a safe medium of international payments. But with one country after another abandoning gold, things may happen between the drawing and the paying of a ninety-day bill against which commercial bankers cannot protect themselves.

Disturbing as this belated price movement is, it carries with it a sort of grim encouragement. If low prices are "sound" prices, we are moving toward a point where the soundness will be unquestioned. If prices must attain equilibrium, one with another, before business can revive, certainly the wild irregularity of the downward movement represents a headlong sweep toward equilibrium. And if business men and consumers can be persuaded to resume operations only when "bargains" are available, the recognition of bargains can hardly be delayed much longer. This is not to say that at some nearby point business activity will suddenly begin to climb toward the old levels. Some of the most orderly, if unspectacular, periods of prosperity in the past have been associated with a commodity price level which was merely stable, or even gently declining.

S. PALMER HARMAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books, Art, Drama

So Long It Has for Echoing

By EDA LOU WALTON

One might—one might—
Dear darkness of the heart
Wherein the pale moon rises and the slight
Flame in the wrist starts suddenly into light!
Yes, love again—come hate, come unconcern,
Still must the tired palm turn
Against the palm,
And the calm moon rise till round it burn
Another hole in heaven.
When day come slanting down the barren hill
Is long, and white, and still,
Yet will the heart not understand, not know
Its prophecy of snow;
Even a broken vessel struck will ring,
So long it has for echoing,
For dying, so long—

A Philosophy for Carnivores

Man and Technics. A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life. By Oswald Spengler. Translated by Charles Francis Atkinson. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

THE present slim volume, Spengler tells us, sets forth a few thoughts taken from a larger work on which he has been engaged for years. Most of the book is given over to a discussion of man's prehistoric origins and alleged inherent nature; the final chapter deals with the present economic crisis and the approaching doom of our civilization, though the precise logical connection between the early chapters and the last is not altogether clear.

Man, Spengler tells us in italics, is a *"beast of prey. . . . Ideals are cowardice. . . . The animal of prey is the highest form of mobile life."* Such an animal "can hold its own only by *fighting and winning and destroying.* It imparts a high dignity to Man, as a type, that he is a beast of prey." The opposite of the soul of a lion is the soul of a cow. "For strength of individual soul the herbivores substitute numbers, the herd, the common feeling and doing of masses. But the less one needs others, the more powerful one is. A beast of prey is everyone's foe. Never does he tolerate an equal in his den. Here we are at the root of the truly royal idea of *property.* Property is the domain in which one exercises unlimited power, the power that one has gained in battling, defended against one's peers, victoriously upheld. It is not a right to mere having, but the sovereign right to do as one will with one's own." Nothing here of "the toothless feeling of sympathy and reconciliation and yearning for quiet." Spengler then proceeds to dilate on the difference between carnivore and herbivore ethics. Herbivore ethics depress, make mean and cowardly, while carnivore ethics elevate "through power and victory, pride and hate." Spengler is proud that the tactics of Man's living "are those of a splendid beast of prey, brave, crafty, and cruel," and that his natural soul "knows the intoxication of feeling when the knife pierces the hostile body, and the smell of blood and the sense of amazement strike together upon the exultant soul."

It would be pointless to "answer" a passage like this. One can only admire such a writer for his courage in making assertions which to a decadent age like ours will seem merely ludicrous. This distinction between "carnivore" and "herbivore" ethics, of course, is merely a biological twist given to Nietzsche's "master morality" and "slave morality," and Spengler's speculations on the original nature of man are no more scientific than Rousseau's. Rousseau was wrong chiefly through the ignorance of the age in which he lived; Spengler is wrong because of a personal determination to be so. This is evident from the high-handed manner in which he deals with the conclusions of science. He contemptuously dismisses in a footnote "the enraged demon of classification that haunts the pure anatomists which brought man close to the apes." His motive in doing this is patent: we know the apes to be herbivorous; if they were carnivorous, Spengler would cite our kinship with them triumphantly. But there is no absurdity that Spengler will shrink from to make his point. He not only rejects Darwinian evolution; he solemnly assures us that man's hands and the tools he has fashioned with them came into existence *together.* "The unarmed hand is in itself useless. It requires a weapon to become itself a weapon. As the implements took form from the shape of the hand, so also the *hand from the shape of the tool."* The italics are Spengler's. His formula seems to be that if a statement is particularly incredible it may be made to seem convincing if it is shouted. He offers no explanation of—indeed, he makes not a single reference to—the weaponless hand of the ape. It is one thing to deny our kinship with the apes; it is quite another to forget their existence.

One would think his analysis would lead Spengler to conclude that the most desirable state of affairs would be one of absolute individualistic anarchy, with men living exclusively on meat, and goods changing hands only through the medium of the club and the knife. This conclusion, for some reason, is not drawn. Spengler turns out, apparently, to be a fascist—though fascism at least implies "law and order"; and why should the lion-souled, the proud carnivores, have any respect for either?

But let us waive these questions, and come to Spengler's final forecast. The machine age is rapidly hastening to an end. The multiplication of machines is beginning to defeat their own economic purpose; in countries where large-scale industry is of old standing the leaders of thought begin to be sick of machines; the workers themselves are revolting against the role for which the machine ("not, as they imagine, its possessors") earmarks most of them. The doom of the industrial white countries began when they ceased using their colonies and backward countries for opening up new markets and new sources of raw material, and stupidly began to export, not finished products exclusively, but "secrets, processes, methods, engineers, and organizers." "The unassailable privileges of the white races have been thrown away, squandered, betrayed. . . . The *accustomed* luxury of the white workman, in comparison with the coolie, will be his doom. The labor of the white is *itself* coming to be unwanted, . . . *This* is the real final basis of the unemployment that prevails in the white countries. It is no mere crisis, but the *beginning of a catastrophe.* . . . The machine-technics will end with the Faustian civilization and one day will lie in fragments, *forgotten*—our railways and steamships as dead as the Roman roads and the Chinese wall, our giant cities and skyscrapers in ruins like old Memphis and Babylon."

Purely as economics, this is vividly imaginative but entirely unsound. When a country that has hitherto been chiefly agricultural throws up a tariff wall to develop its own industries, it shuts off a market from countries with industries expanded to supply that market, and hence produces in those countries a sometimes severe but essentially *temporary* depression. In the long run the newly industrialized country will probably

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

develop a higher purchasing power for the older countries' products; at all events a new equilibrium is finally established. To the problem of "unwanted" white labor there are at least three solutions: (a) the production of a wider range of commodities; (b) the production of a much higher *quality* of the same commodities—for example, housing; and (c) the reduction of the number of working hours to permit more leisure or more "shifts."

As we are doomed, Spengler urges us to meet our doom courageously, gloriously, like thoroughbreds. But this recommendation is illogical in a thoroughly fatalistic philosophy, particularly one which, like his own, holds that civilizations die because of changes that occur *within* man's "soul." A man who writes elsewhere: "The place of . . . 'it ought to be so' is taken by the inexorable 'it is so,' 'it will be so,'" should not be so inconsistent as to tell us how we *ought* to meet our fate.

None of such criticisms individually, however, or even all of them together, can "dispose" of Spengler. "The Decline of the West," for all its defects and even absurdities, remains, with its staggering erudition, its ringing prose, and its imaginative sweep, one of the few great works of the twentieth century. Even the present slim volume is extremely impressive. I have quoted much that is absurd; I have failed to quote much that is admirable. Spengler must be judged, in the end, not by his individual statements but by his total effect. His thought is to be appraised for its seminal value rather than for its logical rigor. Indeed, perhaps he is not to be classed as a "thinker," in the narrow sense, at all. He is, rather, a great dramatist, a prophet, a poet. His prophecies of doom may rest, at bottom, on nothing better than dubious analogies; but they remain an admirable antidote to what he calls progress-optimism and progress-philistinism. And there is always the suspicion that they may be right.

HENRY HAZLITT

Travel Disappoints

They Were Still Dancing. By Evelyn Waugh. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

IN that forgotten era when the waves were ruled by Britannia and Britannia by Lancashire cotton manufacturers, seriousness was the hallmark of the Englishman. His traditional beef and beer, translated into spiritual terms, became obedience to duty, stern morality, solid self-assurance; the responsibility of guiding less favored nations toward the haven of Protestant religion and parliamentary government made him a trifle suspicious of art that was not obviously moral, a trifle obtuse toward more subtle varieties of humor. The war has changed all that. The modern Englishman, relieved of the responsibilities of world rule, despairing of salvation from his own insoluble economic problems, prefers to find life amusing. If he has ideals he submits himself to the protective hands of the Catholic church; he is liable to regard the Byzantine Empire, with its thousand years of unprogressive stability, as the highest society achieved by man. Of this new species of Englishman no one is more typical than Evelyn Waugh, Catholic and cynic.

Mr. Waugh's first novel, "Decline and Fall," was perhaps the most amusing book published in England since the war. The English public school, English high society—so drearily portrayed by pompous autobiographers and would-be Juvenals—became the scene of the most extravagant adventures, related with that mock-serious understatement which is the method of sophisticated humor. In "Vile Bodies," two years later, the method was repeated, but the humor had grown savage; a tortured individual became visible behind the mask of the clown. The adventures were as absurd, but the total impression was too gloomy to be amusing. How Mr. Waugh will develop cannot be foretold; he is still under thirty. In "They Were Still Dancing" he is marking time. He describes a visit to the coronation of the king of Abyssinia, followed by a tour of East Africa and southern Arabia. As a travel book—that very minor genre—it is perfect. The style is lucid and simple, and information is attractively sandwiched between adventures and character sketches. There is an American professor, expecting to be enormously impressed by Abyssinian religion and invariably disappointed by its realities, who might have walked out of "Decline and Fall"; he is at once an epitome of all professors and a very concrete individual. This is avowedly a potboiler; Mr. Waugh saw nothing remarkable—his main theme is that what he saw was always far more ordinary than what he expected to see. But from this unpromising material he has concocted a couple of hours' excellent light entertainment.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

Cabell New and Old

These Restless Heads. By Branch Cabell. Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.50.

AN author should be allowed sometimes to review his own book. But as the more scrupulous journals do not permit such a self-judgment, the next best thing is for the book to be reviewed by the fortunate person to whom it is dedicated. To prevent misunderstanding, I will say at once that the gracious acrostic which makes me in a sense part owner of "These Restless Heads" has not violently prejudiced me against the pages that follow it.

Mr. Cabell has decapitated himself. James Branch Cabell is a gentleman still living in Richmond and likely to live far beyond his earthly years in a certain completed opus, to which nothing can be added by him or by anybody else, except fraudulently. Whatever in the future the gentleman in Richmond may choose to write will be, like the present volume, by an author who has two, not three, words in his name. The introductory quotation from "The Mikado" indicates that this lopping of James off the Branch may be a merry prank. Yet it has an earnest meaning (Cabell has always passed easily from fooling to seriousness); it is a practical confirmation of what he has announced before, that the biographer of Manuel has closed his career. The king is dead. Long live the king!

But the new king so resembles his predecessor as to be rather like a twin brother than a son, and the similarities will rejoice the subjects of James I. The virtues are familiar; much of the substance is new; some of what is new reminds you happily of the elder romancer and critic. The Prologue fancies what happens to Prospero after Shakespeare's curtain falls upon the magic island and the Duke returns to Milan, to the world of pomp and authority, of statesmanly duties, which he completely discharges. But Ariel is now his secret master. It is the contest between common sense and beautiful nonsense. And when at his death Prospero passes from the world of folly back to the wisdom of the magic island, the reader may guess for himself who is the protagonist of this super-Shakespearean fable.

From fantasy we pass abruptly to daylight comedy. Mr. Cabell's morning mail reminds him of many things; of the various kinds of correspondents who pester authors of repute; of visitors to Richmond, not his private friends, who come to see him; of the assumption that writers and artists (especially if, like Mr. Cabell, they have dealt with amatory subjects) must lead wild lives and cannot be just ordinary citizens attending to their business at their typewriters, or at church, or at a meeting of the Board of Trade; of the egotism, strained broad-minded-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness, and artificial immorality of authors; of what girls really were like in his youth, when he was dreaming of the girls he afterward wrote about, girls who never existed but had the only real existence.

Near a Flag in Summer is, prosaically, a satire on patriotism; it is more than that, a gorgeous description of the country, and, still more, an evocation of the country beyond the State in which we happen to live, the limitless ungeographical land of romance. The two countries are in conflict, and the poet lives in both, in one with his body, in the other with his imagination. The conflict is developed in the section called Before Æsred in Autumn. Æsred is the goddess of compromise and conformity whom Cabell discovered, or created, on Mispec Moor, and whom, as he contemplates her bust in his comfortable library, he sees as the wise ruler of the world. Round that world he puts a girdle of golden writing, which embraces history, mythology, literature, and the cosmic significance of a safety match. At the end Æsred is transformed by a simple change of the mechanics of vision to Ettarre the Witch Woman—which is such a sleight-of-hand, or of eye, as we may sometimes find in the works of the late James Branch Cabell.

In a section called On a Journey in Winter the present Mr. Cabell is still in his library among his toys of metal and china and his other toys, the earthly caskets which hold the recorded wisdom of the world. Among the many library essays in which writers have been most happy discoursing of their only true possessors and possessions, this is one of the richest and finest. It is in the spirit of "Beyond Life," but only in a fresh and glowing sense a repetition of that. Some of the sentences have a rhythm of the seventeenth century, of Jeremy Taylor, and of Thomas Browne, who is summoned in an introductory quotation to set the tone. But the tone is Cabell's and it is not maintained at an intolerable level of eloquence; it is varied by modern matters and colloquial self-banter. (We recall a perished writer of considerable talent who had a strange habit of laughing at his own highest solemnities and of not being deluded by his saddest disillusionments.) The gist of the essay is that all the great tales of romance and adventure recount that some man for some reason went on a journey. And life is a journey. And so is the Epilogue of True Thomas by Moonlight, which concludes this book. There is diversified matter in "These Restless Heads," but it has, as its author maintains in the Introduction, "one single main theme"; and the component parts are, in words adjacent to those quoted on the title-page, "all combined in beauty's worthiness."

JOHN MACY

How Utilities "Educate"

The Public Pays: A Study of Power Propaganda. By Ernest Gruening. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

THIS is an important book. To anyone curious to know how public opinion is steered and for what purposes, it is a fascinating one. It is an authoritative account of the stupendous propaganda machine which the public-utility people have built in order to hide and protect a system of almost incredible illicit profit. In the interest of "education" and "public information," they have divided the country into geographic regions, each in charge of committees and numberless subcommittees which bring pressure to bear upon practically every agency that spreads information and shapes opinion in this country.

High schools, colleges, universities, business schools, technical schools, and their principals, deans, presidents, and faculties; the press, the screen, politics, textbook publishers, men's and women's clubs, chambers of commerce, lecture bureaus, boards of education, and even kindergarten children and their teachers, have, in amazing numbers and by the power of very hard cash, been herded into the cast of a huge drama of praise and celebration. Here they sing their songs and do their steps under the skilled choreography of the National Electric Light Association and the Joint Committee, themselves the propaganda and political instruments of the utility hierarchy headed by Morgan, Mellon, the Insulls, Sloan, Owen Young, Byllesby, Carlisle, Sidney Mitchell, and the rest. It is a staggering picture of the power of money and organization, which gains force through the objective way in which Dr. Gruening paints it.

Of all the generalissimi of the utility companies Mr. Merlin H. Aylesworth, former managing director of the National Electric Light Association, seems to have been the most tireless in injecting propaganda into our educational system. And for his good deeds Mr. Owen D. Young promoted him to the presidency of the National Broadcasting Company, at the same time praising him to the skies in a *Saturday Evening Post* interview for his "intuitive sense about relations with the public." Dr. Gruening reveals Mr. Aylesworth advising local utility executives to get economics professors on the pay roll. "For how in heaven's name can we do anything in the schools of this country with the young people growing up, if we have not first sold the idea of education to the college professor?" Incidentally, in looking through the N. E. L. A. minutes seized by the Federal Trade Commission, one runs across Mr. Young solemnly counseling the utility people to write their own economics courses and have them introduced into the colleges, a recommendation which has unfortunately been carried out on a very large scale.

The utility companies maintain their own schools and bureaus for public speakers and have provided for the delivery of as many as 30,000 propaganda speeches a year. High schools are flooded with utility propaganda, and use utility-made "catechisms" in the classroom. In Missouri 659 out of 790 high schools took the utilities' so-called "school service." Literature of this kind abounds with false statements, such as that the utilities are not profit-making organizations. Meanwhile, under the influence of generous subsidies and the hope of more to come, our technical schools and business colleges are turning out tainted textbooks on utility problems under their own dignified imprimata.

Some of Dr. Gruening's disclosures are rather diverting. We find, for instance, Mr. E. C. Deal, of the Electric Bond and Share Company, telling with sincere pride of the benefits obtained by having his local executives identify themselves with Girl- and Boy-Scout movements and become Scout masters. Dr. Hugh Blain, head of the Louisiana-Mississippi committee on schools, reports that in vacation time "we cooperate with the playground workers and thus keep in touch with the school children." One likes to think of Dr. Blain rolling his hoop with his little playmates, meanwhile enlarging on the glories of the power companies and the moderateness of the family light bills.

Like Mr. Aylesworth and Mr. Young, Mr. Matthew S. Sloan, also until very recently on the high command of the utility companies, believes in catching them at an early age. He tells of the work of his committee in providing kindergarten children with fairy tales illustrated in color which recount the adventures of "The Ohm Queen" and describe the wonders of electrical service in the home.

With Dr. Gruening's conclusion that public ownership and operation of utilities have in reality proved as much a success as private ownership and operation have been a failure, all who know the facts and discount the propaganda will agree. But it is hard, for me at least, to share even in his rather faint hope that under private ownership effective regulation may yet grow out of the present wretched system. Regulation in the public interest is, I think, an impossibility for the simple reason that the profits which the utility people make by defeating regu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lation are so vast as to form an irresistible incentive for corrupting the government and capturing the regulating machinery.

If you are keen about education or politics, you should read Dr. Gruening's book. It is not only an illuminated bird's-eye view of the invisible and sordid empire created by the Kilowatt Klan, but a revelation of the fact that the utilities now stand in the position and relation to the public formerly occupied by the railroads in the halcyon piratical days of Gould, Fiske, and Huntington, so vividly described by James Bryce in his "American Commonwealth."

AMOS PINCHOT

Strange Interlude

Only Yesterday. By Frederick Lewis Allen. Harper and Brothers. $3.

TWO years ago last autumn 120,000,000 Americans fell out of bed. They hit the floor with a thud as stock prices crashed to earth, but so sound was the sleep and so captivating the dream that most of the sleepers were only partly roused. They still are hoping to slip back into dreamland "when business picks up." But though most Americans still cling drowsily to their dream, is it not probable that the autumn of 1929 not merely closed a "business cycle"—to be followed by depression, readjustment, and then another boom—but that it ended a civilization which never will, never can, come back?

There seems to be confirmation for this view in this volume by the associate editor of *Harper's Magazine.* Although "only yesterday," the period already looms as remote and unreal as that of the Crusades. Such a mad, preposterous, impossible decade—could it ever have been at all? The war years were extraordinary, but for the most part they were only an intensification of experiences men had known before. The epoch in the United States from the Armistice to the Wall Street crash—the subject of Mr. Allen—was so unusual that one is almost persuaded not only that men never had such experiences before, but that they did not have them even in the nineteen-twenties. The decade seems to belong to mythology, not history, to be an undated fairy story out of a nameless never-never land. We have had books on the Mauve Decade and the Brown Decades. Mr. Allen might have called his epoch the Incredible Decade.

One picks up "Only Yesterday" with some misgivings that it may be simply a medley from the front pages of the newspapers of the past decade, a photograph album of recent years. The author himself, afraid apparently that the book might fail to sell if regarded as too serious or substantial, calls it "an informal history," while the publishers insist that "it is anything but academic." Actually the volume is far from a mere compendium of headlines. It is a sound piece of historical writing, constructed with care, written with verve, and so convincing in its interpretation as to suggest that Mr. Allen—unlike most of the rest of us—either slept through the decade with one eye open or woke with an unusually lucid recollection and understanding of the dream.

All the significant details of the decade are in the volume: the retreat of Wilsonian idealism into the Harding political scandals, the burgeoning of the automobile—there were 6,771,000 passenger cars in 1919 and 23,121,000 in 1929—the career from birth to gianthood of the radio, the exaggerations of advertising, the indecencies of salesmanship, a previously inconceivable use of credit which led thousands of individuals so to conduct their finances that, to borrow a phrase which Max Winkler applied to the Hoover bull market, they discounted "not only the future but the hereafter."

Two words which enjoyed special popularity in the nineteen-twenties were "bunk" and "ballyhoo," suggesting that even in an age of somnambulism people were not quite oblivious to its absurdities, though skepticism never was strong enough to provoke effective opposition. Supreme in the ballyhoo of the day were the words of a supposedly scientific man, a certain Great Engineer, who in accepting the Republican nomination for the Presidency in 1928 said that "we shall soon, with the help of God, be in sight of the day when poverty will be banished from this nation." As one surveys the bread lines and soup kitchens of 1932, the conviction is inevitable that God did not hold up his end.

Mr. Allen is not occupied unduly with politics and industry. He realizes that the revolution in manners and morals, the thoughts and aspirations of the decade, were even more consequential. He recalls the revolt of the Younger Generation (and older ones too) against previously accepted standards. Supposedly the god of the decade was science, but actually old Dr. Darwin was less potent than old Dr. Freud in molding the thought of the epoch, though the fundamentalists lacked the wit to discern it. Before the decade ended, the obsession of sex had waned, and, as Mr. Allen puts it, "the wages of sin had become stabilized at a lower level."

Mr. Allen picks on disillusion as the dominating spirit of a decade in which—amazing paradox—braying advertisers and ballyhooing mountebanks seemed to drown all other voices. This, in turn, led to a surprising preoccupation with trifles, culminating in the adoration of Lindbergh for a feat accurately described by Mr. Allen as simply "a daring stunt flight." In the hullabaloo the newspapers failed to remind their readers—a majority do not know it even today—that a non-stop flight had been made across the Atlantic eight years earlier. Mr. Allen bases the adulation of Lindbergh partly on the young man's subsequent modesty and good taste. But though these augmented and made more lasting his idolization, the fact is that in the subtle workings of mass psychology this "stunt flier" had become the hero of the decade by the time he stepped out of his plane in Paris.

What a mad, bizarre, unbelievable era it was! How exciting to live through if not rich in enduring legacies! Poor Mr. Harding, thinking to give us "normalcy," ushered in the most abnormal decade in the history of this, perhaps of any, country. Reaching back to 1918, we can grasp the firm foundations of the ghastly war years, while since the autumn of 1929 America has been at grips with the even ghastlier realities of an unhealing peace. But stretching between was a gorgeous, giddy, gargantuan pageant which we now apprehend vaguely only as a strange interlude.

ARTHUR WARNER

Books in Brief

History of Palestine and Syria to the Macedonian Conquest. By A. T. Olmstead. Charles Scribner's Sons. $7.50.

To the fine series of histories of ancient civilizations—Breasted's "Egypt," the present author's "Assyria," and Means's "Ancient Civilization of the Andes" (Rogers's "Persia," regrettably, is not up to the standard of the others)—Mr. Olmstead adds a comprehensive, authoritative, and well-written history of the lands that bordered the great highway of ancient civilization in the Near East. Dr. Olmstead turns to other sources than the Bible for his material, reveals again how relatively short and sporadic was Hebrew national life in Palestine and how deeply it was influenced by predecessors and neighbors, and puts it into its proper niche in history. If this niche is a small one, it must be remembered that Judaism and its offshoot, Christianity, became historically more important to Western Europe than they ever were to the ancient Near East.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Except for a tendency to describe buildings and archaeological sites in detail (pardonable perhaps since excavations have furnished the most important data for the modern historian) Dr. Olmstead's volume is continuously readable.

The Psychology of a Primitive People. By S. D. Porteus. Longmans, Green and Company. $6.

Dr. Porteus went to Australia to apply intelligence tests to the fast-dwindling aborigines. The tests demonstrated little that his own general observations had not already covered. Dr. Porteus believes, and quite persuades us, that the Australian aborigine is not, intellectually, as low as was formerly supposed. The poverty of his culture is part of the poverty of the land, for Australia is not only mainly a desert, but contained no large animals, until white settlers introduced them, which could be domesticated. Dr. Porteus has a genuine literary talent, and the many pages he gives to his vindication of the aborigines and his description of their subtle social adaptation to desert life make very interesting reading.

The Flower of Life. By Thomas Burke. Little, Brown and Company. $2.

Thomas Burke's brief tale of progress to the poorhouse is neither a *nouvelle* nor a short story: it is in effect the synopsis of a long, realistic novel with a story which has been told too often to be very moving. The heroine works and loses her positions through accidents; she marries, and her husband leaves her with her infant daughter, who grows up to die in disgrace. These events are related, rather than dramatized, and with a refinement of sentimentality Jane Cameron is sent at last to the workhouse, mainly, it seems, because it is the one fate she has most feared. Life is "an unconstructed blur of pain and joy and inertia," the author says in his moral, and "Life is a novel dreamed by God in a garden."

Zodiak. By Walter Eidlitz. Translated from the German by Eric Sutton. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Gambo is an Anatolian peasant boy. An "exchange of population," under the terms of the Versailles peace treaty, moves him and his fellow-Greeks from Turkish soil to Athens. In Athens this naive product of "Asiatic earth" comes in contact with the modern world and, above all, with the machine. He learns to be a car-washer, a chauffeur, and an aviator. In Egypt he manages to board the Zodiak, a giant Communist plane which is spreading propaganda for the world revolution. The Zodiak crosses the Mediterranean and then the Atlantic. While dropping leaflets over New York it explodes. The Russian members of the crew are all killed, but Gambo wakes up to find himself, miraculously alive, in the Medical Center, Convalescent, his leg in a plaster cast, he is permitted to take a few symbolic steps on "American earth" before the story ends. Throughout, of course, Gambo is simply an instrument of the fancy of Herr Eidlitz, who is a young Viennese playwright and novelist. The book is prefaced by a sentence from the pen of Henry Ford: "Shall we not some day reach a point where the machine becomes all powerful and the man of no consequence?" At the end Gambo comes to the conclusion that "we men will have to evolve quite another kind of consciousness. . . . We shall have to strengthen our consciousness so as to remain master of the machines that are to come." He represents the oldest continent, and has come to the newest to face the problems of our day. Herr Eidlitz's knowledge of these problems is as remarkable as his knowledge of New York. He talks of the Medical Center with the same sure facility that he shows in talking of the machine age. He is a European journalist who can shake headlines and history together into a cocktail for intellectuals. There is a distinctive dash of idealism. The cocktail tastes good if drunk quickly.

BONIBOOKS
$1.
AMERICAN OXFORD DICTIONARY
Compiled by F. G. and H. W. Fowler
EDUCATION AND THE GOOD LIFE
Bertrand Russell
GREAT SHORT STORIES OF THE WORLD
Edited by Barrett H. Clark and Maxim Lieber
OXFORD BOOK OF AMERICAN VERSE
Edited by Bliss Carman
ISRAEL
Ludwig Lewisohn
AGAINST THE GRAIN
J. K. Huysmans
OUR BUSINESS CIVILIZATION
James Truslow Adams
THE HIGH PLACE
James Branch Cabell
THIS EARTH OF OURS
Jean-Henri Fabre
WHAT IS WRONG WITH MARRIAGE
Hamilton & MacGowan
SOUTH WIND
Norman Douglas
MICHELANGELO
Romain Rolland
THE HISTORY OF MR. POLLY
H. G. Wells
TAR
Sherwood Anderson
ALBERT & CHARLES BONI NEW YORK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHAOS OR CONTROL

a series of five articles by

GEORGE SOULE

will be published in consecutive issues of The New Republic, beginning in the issue of March 9. The articles are an exposition of and argument for the idea of national economic planning; an effort to explain planning, to convince its opponents of the need for it, and to explore some of its conditions and its possibilities. Showing, first, the inability of the contemporary business man and his satellites—banker, technologist, consumer—to control their individual economic destinies, Mr. Soule bases the case for planning on the premise that the driving force of social evolution lies, not in the profit motive, but in the impulse and faculty of man to organize his work, his play and his group. From our experiences in 1917 and 1918 he deduces certain of the elements which are essential for successful national planning, and searches the Russian experiment for the useful suggestions which it offers. In the concluding article he proposes an objective for a national plan, and outlines the steps by which it might be achieved. The series will be published under the following subdivisions:

I IMPOTENT BUSINESS
II THE ORGANIZING MAN
III WE LEARN FROM WAR
IV RUSSIA'S ECONOMIC INVENTIONS
V A CHALLENGE TO INACTION

SPECIAL OFFER:

13 weeks of The New Republic, including all the articles in the series "Chaos or Control" $1

THE NEW REPUBLIC, 421 West 21st Street, New York, N. Y.

For the enclosed $1.00 (check or money order, if possible,) please send me The New Republic for the next 13 weeks, including all the articles in the series "Chaos or Control," by George Soule.

Name .....

City .....

Street .....

State .....

N-2-24

Art

Conversation with a *Surréaliste*

IT was after eleven when W—— blew in. He had a bad cold; had been at home sick-a-bed; and "Come on and lunch!" he commanded.

"I've got to go to the Julien Levy gallery again," I temporized. "It's the final day of the *surréaliste* show, and I've still to get up my article on it. While I do not agree with those who find the movement as important as cubism (I don't think its achievements at all equal the cubists' in pictorial values) I can't help sympathizing with a romantic attempt like *surréalisme's* to reach new expression through new subject matter. Come on along! I'd imagine you would consider escorting me there a duty, you surréalistic poet."

He flung himself comfortably down. "I'm curious to know how you expect to focus an article on *surréalisme* through an exhibition which omits examples of at least three of the leaders of the movement," he challenged.

"Meaning whom?"

"Paul Klee, Giorgio De Chirico, and Joan Miro."

"I confess I missed Arp, and canvases by Max Ernst of the grandiosity of those I saw in an exhibition in Düsseldorf two summers ago; but then Levy's gallery is small: a bit of *surréalisme* in itself; and quite a lot of the paintings and 'montages' he has on exhibition amused me. I like Pierre Roy, I guess everyone does; and one or two of the Ernsts make me feel the fellow has a mighty delicate imagination. Besides—I'm in favor of these fantasies: they give me a sense of knowing what people are like, today, with their queer manias and phobias and obsessions. But perhaps you are right; the show may not be representative. I dare say the one held in the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford was broader. I have thought of confining myself to a restatement of the aims of the movement. What intimidates me from essaying such a formulation is the fact that a very concise little one already exists, in the shape of the release which young Levy sent out to the newspapers before the opening of his show. You saw it, did you not? Whether he derives his information from André Breton, who appears to be the logician of the movement, or whether it is the product of his own observations I do not know. In any case, he very succinctly explains the dependence of the movement upon Freud. The old thaumaturge's interpretations of dreams, the symbols of the fantasy world, and the entire realm of subconscious phenomena had fortified these artists in their conviction that as great an amount of reality is conveyed through these obscure, fantastic symbols—the queer indefinable feelings and images which pop into one's mind and haunt it and defy analysis and explanation—as through the more logical expressions. I think he says, 'The dream world has a continuity which our memory has been used to neglect. There are fancies of real validity in childhood which have been discontinued for the expediencies of adult life, and lying hidden in some corner of our mind, reach an unearthly maturity of their own. Mythology, superstition, magic, from the culture of childhood, may still live with accumulated sophistication as unrealized phantoms in our modern civilization.' Besides, who knows what has, and what has not, a good reason for existing? My one question, on reading these lines, was relative to the differentiation of *surréalisme* from expressionism. That, too, was an art of the indefinable; that, too, accepted the dream-symbol, the fantastic association, the haunting indefinite sensations, as a valid expression of reality. I spoke of this to Levy, and he explained that the *surréalistes* were differentiated from the expressionists by their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conviction that the world contains an objective correspondence for every feeling, every fancy, and that it is their business to find and depict it—"

Angrily my *surréaliste* friend interrupted. "That's all got nothing to do with it!"

"The explanation is incorrect?"

"It's worse than incorrect! It's pedantic; and if *surréalisme* is anything at all, it's a protest against pedantry, against the mass of knowledge and technique which lies heavy on life and chokes the manifestations of the spirit. A protest against the habit of analyzing and rationalizing. If it's a product of Freudianism, it's also a protest against the kind of Freudian analysis which dissects every bit of spontaneity and lyricism in the interests of a search for causes. For me, *surréalisme* seems the last flickering manifestation of spirit in this rationalistic, regimented, practical-materialistic world, the last defiant appearance of the impulse which is its own justification and doesn't need to rationalize or formulate or justify itself, because it is its own satisfaction; because it is unquestioningly responsive, through handy means, and in utter fidelity to its lights, to a given stimulus. Its products are to be enjoyed or marveled at or laughed over—or thrust aside. But not to be codified, and explained, and rationalized. It either carries conviction, or it fails."

"I understand; but aren't you being too generous? Isn't *surréalisme* the essense of logicality, for all its protests against logic, for all its pretense to exploit the unconscious mind? Is not the deliberate exclusion of the conscious mind from participation in expression but a way of preventing the unconscious from manifesting itself? You know, it seems that the two minds reveal themselves only in conjunction, and that tricks like automatic writing and all similar attempts to free the subconscious from conscious control result in a mass of evasions and abortions. Hence, the elimination of the conscious mind from expression would seem to be but another triumph of the logical strait-jacket, another form of repressing the unconscious. Isn't *surréalisme* a characteristic product of those terrible rationalists, the French, and meaningless in Germanic and Anglo-Saxon countries, where mystical and anti-logical expressions are almost traditional? They are traditional in our poetry, certainly: Blake is in the great English tradition, and such contemporary *surréalistes* as yourself and Cummings and Cary Ross, in their way, too. I don't know whether Cummings is a *surréaliste,* but Ross surely is—I noticed the people who got up the show in Hartford headed their program with one of his little poems—"

"Ross is plainly a *surréalist* poet; I think the best in America. But, pardon me if I find these literary analogies forced. What you say about logical illogicality may be true of Breton and his crowd, though I understand they abandoned automatic writing and all that years ago. But Klee and Miro and De Chirico certainly combine the two minds; they have certainly added to pictorial experience. So have Ernst, and Arp—"

"And Salvador Dali, the newcomer, the fellow who paints watches to look like saddles? From a distance, his things look like Patiniers or some other German primitives; don't you think?"

"That's exactly why I leave him out. *Surréalisme* is an expression of spirit, or nothing; and Dali's primitivism seems a bit of shrewdness; particularly in view of the recent craze for German primitives in the circle of the Vicomte de Noailles, the patron of *surréalisme.* Well, I suppose you are getting ready to go to Levy's gallery and get up your article on the movement there?"

"Not at all. Let's go to lunch. I've seen the *surréaliste* thing quite clearly, I think, or as brightly as I could see it anywhere. Thanks for the article, my dear W——!"

PAUL ROSENFELD

□ PLAYS □ DEBATES □

The Theatre Guild Presents
EUGENE O'NEILL'S TRILOGY
MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA
Composed of 3 plays
Homecoming, The Hunted, The Haunted
All 3 plays will be presented on one day, commencing at 5:30 sharp. Dinner intermission of one hour at 7 o'clock. No matinee performances.
GUILD THEATRE, 52d St., West of Broadway

THE THEATRE GUILD PRESENTS
REUNION IN VIENNA
a comedy by ROBERT E. SHERWOOD
MARTIN BECK THEA., 45 St. & 8 Ave. PEnn. 6-6100 Evgs. 8:40. Mats. Thurs. & Sat. 2:40

CIVIC LIGHT Opera Co. presents ROBIN HOOD LAST WEEK
Beg. Mon. Mat. (Washington's Birthday)—Two weeks only—Seats now
BEPPIE de VRIES DONALD BRIAN
THE MERRY WIDOW
Thrift Prices: Eves. 50c to $2.50, Wed. Mat. 50c to $1.50.
Sat. and Hol. Mats. 50c to 2.
ERLANGER'S THEATRE, W. 44th St. PEnn 6-7963. Eves. 8:30

GILBERT MILLER Presents
EDNA BEST and HERBERT MARSHALL
in THERE'S ALWAYS JULIET
A Comedy by John van Druten
EMPIRE THEATRE, BROADWAY AND 40th STREET
Matinees Wednesday and Saturday at 2:30
EXTRA MATINEE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY

HELEN HAYES
in MOLNAR'S New Comedy
THE GOOD FAIRY
HENRY MILLER'S THEATRE, 124 West 43rd Street
Evenings 8:50 Mats. Thurs., Sat. 2:40
Extra Matinee Washington's Birthday

LESLIE HOWARD
in PHILIP BARRY'S New Comedy
THE ANIMAL KINGDOM
Staged by GILBERT MILLER
"The season's most gratifying adventure."
—Percy Hammond, Herald-Tribune.
BROADHURST THEA. 44th St., West of B'way. Eves. 8:40
Mats. Wednesday, Saturday, 2:30
Extra Matinee Washington's Birthday

A Clearing House Of Opinion THE GROUP Meets at Auditorium 150 West 85th St.
Tuesday evening, Feb. 23, at 8:30 P. M.
Symposium on
IS THE WORLD READY FOR DISARMAMENT?
Speakers
DR. JOHN H. LATHROP COL. M. SIMMONS
Y. T. CHANG IRMA KRAFT
THIS SUNDAY, (Feb. 21) at 4:30 p.m., Dr. S. BERLIN, on The New Morality

DEBATE
SUNDAY FEB. 21, 8:30
RESOLVED: That religion cannot contribute to the economic and social regeneration of the world."
B. C. VLADECK vs. RABBI ALEX. LYONS
SPECIAL EVENT
Sunday, February 28th, 8:30 p.m.
"Should American Workers Form a Political Party of Their Own?"
MORRIS HILLQUIT Says—YES! MATTHEW WOLL Says—NO!
BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC
30 Lafayette Avenue near Flatbush Avenue
Tickets: 25c, 50c, $1.00—at Box Office and at Rand Book Store, 7 E. 15 St., N.Y.
Auspices:—BROOKLYN FORUM—SOCIALIST PARTY

When writing to advertisers please mention The Nation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

UNITY HOUSE REUNION

Dance & Oriental Buffet Dinner

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 28th, 2 P. M. at GRAND CENTRAL GARDENS, 46th St. and Lexington Ave.

Unity re-unites to perpetuate the memory of the good old summer time; to bring together the host of vacation friends. Hall Johnson and his group will be there. The Compinskys, too! Dora Boshoer, Lazar Freed and other favorites will recall a few of Unity's artistic events.

Tickets $1.00 (includes Oriental Buffet Dinner, Program and Dance). Music by NORWOOD and His Radio Artists.

Obtainable at UNITY HOUSE, New York Office: 3 West 16th Street. Telephone CHelsea 3-2148.

□ BOOKS □

HUNGER AND LOVE

A novel by Lionel Britton

Introduction by Bertrand Russell

BERNARD SHAW, BERTRAND RUSSELL, ARNOLD BENNETT, LAURENCE STALLINGS and UPTON SINCLAIR are a few of those who have lavished extravagant praise on this novel.

BERTRAND RUSSELL declares: "I have not for a long time read a book so filled with the right kind of rage . . . I think it is a great book."

This volume, originally published by Harper and Brothers at $4.00, has been taken over by the Vanguard Press and is now reissued at $3.00. Its present publishers are convinced that this novel will take its place beside such masterpieces as JEAN CHRISTOPHE, WAR AND PEACE and GROWTH OF THE SOIL.

623 Pages $3.00 at bookstores

THE VANGUARD PRESS 100 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

□ RESORTS □

ENJOY WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND AT

SCHILDKRAUT'S ON THE HUDSON

Between Bear Mountain and West Point, Highland Falls, N. Y.
Tel. Highland Falls 340 or 930

Especially attractive rate, Feb. 19 to 22 (3 days), $14.00. By the day, $5 and $6. All winter sports. Free auto trips to and from Bear Mountain Park, ice skating sunshine or rain. Special features: The famous Max Peters Orchestra for musical entertainment and dancing, and other high class talent.

□ TOURS □

TOURS TO THE SOVIET UNION

Soviet Visa Free $145 up All Expenses Included

Special Attractive Offer for the May 1 Celebration Groups

TRAVEL BARGAINS TO ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD

For particulars apply

GUSTAVE EISNER

1133 BROADWAY NEW YORK CITY

Chelsea 3-5080

Drama

Cleopatra's Nose

IN "If Booth Had Missed" (Maxine Elliott Theater) Mr. Arthur Goodman undertakes to imagine what the course of American history would have been if Lincoln had escaped the bullet of his assassin. He begins at the logical beginning with a scene outside the Presidential box, and though he ends lamely enough with a very conventional tableau, the whole is a fairly well-written play which manages to hold a certain level of interest even if it nowhere rises to anything remotely suggesting greatness. As Lincoln, Daniel Poole is unusually satisfactory, and the general atmosphere is more convincing than the atmosphere of such plays usually is.

Perhaps, however, the explanation of its rather tepid quality lies simply in the fact that the story works itself out to a conclusion too nearly the same as the conclusion of actual history, and that one accordingly ends with the feeling that there has been rather more to do about a hypothetical case than events will justify. In Mr. Goodman's imagination, Thaddeus Stevens and General Butler play essentially the roles which history has actually assigned them. With the cooperation of Secretary Stanton and the passive acquiescence of General Grant, they pursue their policy of revenge until they finally succeed in bringing Lincoln—instead of Johnson—to an impeachment before the Senate, and then, when he is finally acquitted by a single vote, another assassin arises to succeed where Booth had failed. Two years have passed since the incident in Ford's Theater, but the situation has not really changed, and it is hard to imagine how this postponement of the assassination could have had any very significant effect upon the course of events. If Booth had missed, someone else would have hit. Johnson would still have become President, and it would still have been the Butlers and the Stevenses who would have managed the business of reconstruction. One may easily grant the reasonableness of the supposition, but it seems hardly worth while to change history at all if one is merely going to change it into something so much like its original self.

Like most historical dramas, Mr. Goodman's assumes the "great-man theory" of history. Such speculations as the one with which he begins are interesting only on the assumption that Lincoln's character was a determining factor, and that the drama which ended in his death was a drama played out between two unique personalities which happened to be significant to a nation. But to sustain that thesis it would be necessary to show how a changed fate for the individuals would have involved a changed fate for the nation, and it is just that which Mr. Goodman fails to do. The appearance of the second assassin implies that the first was the product of a force, and to say that is to incline toward a theory of history which makes obviously futile all questions like the one which this drama raises. If Mr. Goodman actually meant to contend that, in any event, *someone* would have shot Lincoln and *someone* would have been impeached because conditions made inevitable the actual history of the reconstruction, then his contention is a subject less suitable for a drama than for a treatise upon the determination of history. I suspect, however, that one need not go so far for an explanation of the essential weakness of the play. Mr. Goodman, having started with a bold idea, was finally faced with the fact that he could not really imagine a satisfactory original conclusion to the hypothetical statement which his title begins.

"The Marriage of Cana" (Provincetown Theater) is an occasionally amusing but amateurish comedy of Negro life acted by an all-Negro cast. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liberty in the Irish Free State

By ROBERT REINHART

WHATEVER traces of civil liberty were left in the Irish Free State after the Public Safety Act of 1927 have now been destroyed by the constitutional amendment which was forced through the Dail last October in three days.* The Free State now stands before the world as a country with a weapon of tyranny unparalleled in any other country that has not an out-and-out dictatorship. Already twelve organizations have been declared illegal. Four newspapers have been suppressed. One man is alleged to have been severely beaten while in custody. At least fifty persons have been brought before a military tribunal which meets in secret and has the power of imposing the death penalty. Southern Ireland is again under martial law.

When the Free State constitution was adopted in 1922, it was hailed by students of government as a remarkable document, and by lovers of liberty for its very adequate bill of rights. By virtue of this new law, which is no ordinary act of parliament but a constitutional amendment, all the articles which guaranteed those civil liberties common in democratic states, and which were already abrogated in part by previous acts, were rendered for practical purposes null and void.

The title of this amendment is "An Act to Amend the Constitution by Inserting Therein an Article Making Better Provision for Safeguarding the Rights of the People and Containing Provisions for Meeting a Prevalence of Disorder." It establishes a tribunal of five members, all of whom shall be officers of the defense forces not below the rank of commandant. No more than three members are to sit at any trial and they are to have "full and absolute power to punish in such manner as they think proper all persons whom the tribunal finds guilty of contempt of the tribunal or any member thereof, whether such contempt is or is not committed in the presence of the tribunal."

Important extracts from this amendment, which has in all thirty-four clauses, follow:

> No appeal shall lie from any order, conviction, sentence, or other act of the tribunal, and the tribunal shall not be restrained or interfered with . . . by any court. . . .
>
> Whenever the tribunal finds any person guilty of an offense . . . the tribunal may, in lieu of the punishment provided by law for such offense, sentence such person to suffer any greater punishment (including the penalty of death) if in the opinion of the tribunal such greater punishment is necessary or expedient.
>
> No coroner's inquest shall be held in relation to a death occasioned by the execution of a sentence of death pronounced by the tribunal [a sinister clause probably inserted to prevent evidence of torture].
>
> Whenever any member of the Garda Siochana or of the defense forces . . . observes a person whom he suspects of having committed or being about to commit . . . an offense mentioned in the appendix to this article or having knowledge of the commission or intended commission of any such offense, such member . . . may stop such person and search and interrogate him and may there and then apprehend such person without warrant, and may use . . . such force as may be necessary.

Should an arrested citizen be released and seek redress for his arrest, then a soldier or civic guard states on oath in any court of justice that he suspected the citizen of being implicated in offenses under the new act. And such statement "shall be conclusive evidence, incapable of being rebutted or questioned by cross-examination, rebutting evidence, or otherwise. . . ." These extracts could be duplicated by others equally severe, but will suffice to show the tone of this extraordinary document.

Specifically, the list of offenses to be dealt with by the tribunal includes violations of the Treasonable Offenses Act of 1925, the Juries Act of 1929, the Firearms Act of 1925, and seditious libel. Such offenses may be tried by the military committee whether committed before or after the passage of the act. Hence this law operates in a very real sense as would an *ex post facto* statute. Briefly put, it means that the rights and privileges originally written into the constitution, which deal with such fundamental principles as habeas corpus, inviolability of a man's dwelling, the right of assemblage, and the right to a trial by jury, have been abolished for Republican sympathizers.

The tribunal was set up immediately after the act was passed. The twelve organizations suppressed are the Irish Republican Army, officered by veterans of the 1916-23 phases of the armed struggle and composed of a younger generation of Republicans; Saor Eire (Free Ireland), an organization of workers and working farmers, based upon the common ownership of the means of production, industry and agriculture, distribution and exchange; Fianna Eireann (Republican Boy Scouts); Cumann na mBan, the Republican women's organization which supports the Republican army in its recruiting and publicity campaign; Friends of Soviet Russia; Irish Labor Defense League; Workers' Defense Corps; Women's Prisoners' Defense League; Irish Tribute League; Irish Working Farmers' Committee; Workers' Research Bureau; and the Workers' Revolutionary Party, the Communist Party of Ireland. No differentiation is made between political and non-political organizations. Hence no distinction is made between such an obviously constitutional body as the Women's Prisoners' Defense League, an organization which sends relief to political prisoners, and such avowed revolutionary groups as the Republican Army or the Workers' Revolutionary Party.

Three newspapers, the *Irish Worker*, the *Worker's Voice*, and *An Phoblacht* (the *Republic*), were suppressed at once as seditious—and sedition, according to Mr. Fitzgerald-Kenney, Minister of Justice, is "anything which disturbs public order." Another paper suppressed is the *Irish World*, a Republican newspaper published in New York City, also declared to be seditious. Following the suppression of these

* Ordinarily it takes several months to pass a constitutional amendment. Perhaps a month's discussion ensues on each reading. This bill was forced through under a closure—the bill being given the three required readings in three successive days.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

papers, the *Republican File* made its appearance for three brief weeks in December. As the second week's issue was about to go to press, the Criminal Investigation Department raided the offices and forbade publication until proof sheets had been examined. Publication of this issue was delayed twenty-four hours. Several of the later issues were suppressed. Its editor, Frank Ryan, who had been the editor of *An Phoblacht,* was arrested and charged with sedition. He was jailed by the tribunal for "contempt" when he refused to recognize its authority. At the end of his three months' sentence, he will be tried for sedition, an offense which the tribunal has the power to punish by death.

The reason for these new acts of suppression, which in all probability will renew with increased severity the seven-hundred-year-old Irish question, is that Republican sympathizers never accepted the Free State compromise but continued to demand complete disassociation from England. From the nature of this bill it would appear that the movement is growing stronger, and that a resurgence of national feeling has occurred.

Republican propagandists have made great capital of the treatment accorded political prisoners, none of whom are recognized as such but are treated as ordinary criminals. According to statements issued by the Women's Prisoners' Defense League, "none of the prison reforms adopted in other countries have penetrated the Free State . . . which took over the English prisons at their worst. . . . In one year thirteen prisoners had to be transferred to an insane asylum."

Perhaps one reason for the new infusion of enthusiasm which has been injected into the Republican movement is that a large number of the younger men have come to feel that British imperialism is not the only enemy, but that Irish capitalism, its ally, must also be fought; which signifies that the Irish will now have two causes on their hands, the second being one which might easily split the purely Republican movement still further. How much of a class movement has developed cannot really be estimated, but it may be asserted that over 90 per cent of the I. R. A. members belong to Saor Eire. Should the Republican movement change from a mere movement for independence to a real left-wing movement, it would hardly find much sympathy in tory America.

Eamon de Valera continues as the leader of the conservative Republicans. He occupies a position analogous to that of Gandhi in India, his sole concern being independence, for which he agitates only within the limits which he considers legal. In the opinion of members of the left-wing groups in both Ireland and India, De Valera and Gandhi have bourgeois minds.

Although it has been charged that the Republican movement is affiliated with Moscow, this has been vehemently denied by the suppressed groups, excepting, of course, avowed Communists. Examination of the constitution of Saor Eire does, however, reveal a trend toward the left. Its objects are to "achieve an independent and revolutionary leadership for the working class and working farmers toward the overthrow in Ireland of British imperialism and its ally, Irish capitalism," and "to organize and consolidate the Republic of Ireland on the basis of the possession and administration by the workers and working farmers of the land and the instruments of production, distribution, and exchange." The tactics to be employed are described in language reminiscent of that of Marx and Lenin. "The task before Saor Eire falls into two phases . . . a phase of intensive organizational and propagandist activity . . . [until such time as] power will pass from the imperialists into the hands of the masses of the Irish people. The second phase will be the consolidation of that power by the organization of the economy of the workers' and working farmers' republic."

The first man to be tried by the tribunal was John Mulgrew, an American citizen who was charged with being a member of Saor Eire. Although he had joined this organization before it was proscribed, he was sentenced to six months' hard labor and subsequent deportation. Reliable reports from Ireland state that he was brutally beaten by the police for refusing to reveal the names of his fellow-members. In reply to an inquiry made on his behalf by American citizens in this country, it was declared by the American Department of State that although Mulgrew was an American citizen he "was sentenced for being a member of a Communist organization." "Additional information" has been requested by the State Department from the American Minister in Dublin, but it is hardly to be expected that any action will be taken by a government which prosecutes Communists at home.

An estimate received from Ireland last month places the number of political prisoners arrested since the passage of the act at about forty, but information received from the same source declares that "the number of prisoners is increasing daily and the greatest secrecy is maintained" by the officers arresting them.

A recent statement made by an Irish refugee newly arrived in this country announces that prisoners, both tried and untried, receive "appalling treatment. No letters, parcels, papers, visits by relatives are allowed untried men. Arbour Hill, one of the jails where politicals have been confined, has no heating of any kind. Prisoners lie upon a plank bed with a mattress and the rule of 'absolute silence' has been imposed. Convict garb is forced upon the sentenced political prisoners, whose heads are shaved and who are compelled to work thirteen hours a day." Proof that prisoners are beaten before trial is alleged to have been provided by the death on Christmas day of James Vaugh, from whom the police tried to extract information while he was in custody. Since Vaugh had not been sentenced by the tribunal, an inquest was ordered but it has been postponed four times. The medical examiner's report declared that he had died of meningitis, following repeated beatings. This is the first death arising out of the enforcement of the Public Safety Act. Vaugh is said to have been a commandant in the illegal Republican Army. To what extent the authorities are carrying out these repressive measures is shown also by the fact that a Catholic priest was recently refused admission to Mountjoy Prison to administer to the spiritual needs of three women prisoners held under the act.

What such repression will lead to cannot be forecast. It is clear, however, that the Irish question, once thought settled by the establishment of the Free State, is still with us. Whether these new measures of oppression which seem to be a confession of weakness and fear on the part of the government will not strengthen the Republicans is a point which may be seriously considered. Ireland nearly won her freedom after the war. Measures such as these may help her to achieve complete independence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED